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Bentley, A. P

History of the abduction of William Morg







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HISTORY  
OF THE  
ABDUCTION  
OF  
William Morgan,  
AND THE  
ANTI-MASONIC EXCITEMENT  
OF 1826-30,

WITH MANY DETAILS AND INCIDENTS NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

BY A. P. BENTLEY.

MT. PLEASANT, IOWA:  
VAN CISE & THROOP, FREE PRESS OFFICE.  
1874.



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## PREFACE.

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IN December last the author of this little volume wrote for the "FREE PRESS," at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, a sketch of the History of the Abduction of William Morgan, and the excitement which followed that occurrence, detailing some incidents and facts which had never before been published. These sketches were published in the issue of that paper of December 26th, 1873, and the three succeeding numbers of January following. The publishers anticipating a demand for extra copies, issued some two hundred surplus numbers to their regular editions, but these were soon exhausted, and so many orders came in which they could not fill, that it was proposed by them to issue the work in this form. Being also urged by many friends, the author has carefully reviewed the publication in the newspaper form, re-writing it in a more full and complete manner, adding many details and incidents not appearing in the first publication, and correcting all erroneous statements that would naturally occur in a hastily penned newspaper article.

No one can more readily realize than I do that portions of this work may appear stale to some readers, as parts of it in substance have been in print for more than forty years, and issued in various forms, but a new generation has arisen since the days when these events took place, and many younger readers may never perhaps have read them in a form in which the matter could be readily understood.

The events narrated here have been carefully gathered from the most reliable sources, many of which are detailed from an actual personal knowledge, and from records published at the time of their occurrence. Nearly half a century has elapsed since the time of the disappearance of William Morgan, and his supposed murder, and it is believed this work, reciting the principal scenes in the excitement which followed will not prove uninteresting at this time. The time is not very remote when those who were in the midst of life and cotemporary to these events will have passed away, and the history



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the Masonic magazines and periodicals there is a statement that he was one of Lafitte's piratical band which rendezvoused near the mouth of the Mississippi river, and received a general amnesty for his crimes on condition of joining the army of Gen. Jackson in the defence of New Orleans in 1814-15. Also that he deserted from New Orleans before the battle of the 8th of January, 1815. This story was first published in the "American Free Mason," about 1858, and has nothing else to support its authenticity than the romantic author's imagination. The same fiction is repeated in the "National Freemason," in 1867, and is probably derived from the same source. The most satisfactory account of his history so far as is known, is, that he lived a sort of a vagabond life, working at his trade at intervals in his native or adjoining counties, till after he was upwards of forty years of age. In 1819, he was married to Lucy (or Lucinda) Pendleton, a young daughter of a Methodist clergyman. He was about forty-five years of age at the time of his marriage, and it has been many times published that his wife was but fifteen. The fact is she was about twenty, as verified by her own statement given on a trial against a party for the abduction of her husband in 1829, when she stated she was then thirty years of age. It was also said and published that "Morgan, a man of forty-five, literally *abducted* this motherless girl, and perjured himself in obtaining license of marriage," and that her reverend father died of grief at being so cruelly bereft of a darling daughter. The truth of this, especially in its exaggerated form, may well be doubted, but a writer in the "American Freemason," a few years ago, wove them into a very pretty sensational romance, which if true would make Morgan a monster indeed. It is, however, well authenticated that he

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was intemperate to a very immoderate degree, and possessed of but few moral principles or attributes perhaps of honor or honesty. He had only a very limited education, but those who were personally acquainted with him at Rochester and Batavia, concur that he was pleasant in his manners when sober, and conducting towards his family and friends in those seasons like other men of similar habits. He had a wonderful faculty of getting into debt, but none to get out. He was considered among his acquaintances, what would at this day probably be called a "dead beat."

In 1821, he moved with his wife to Little York (now Toronto) Canada, and commenced the business of a brewer. He does not appear to have been very prosperous, as he was constantly embarrassed and annoyed by importunate creditors. His brewery was soon burned and he was left a hopeless bankrupt. After this misfortune, he is reported as giving himself up wholly to his former habits of intoxication, and for a time his wife only subsisted on the charity of the neighbors. He stole away from his creditors who had obtained writs for his imprisonment, and being pursued, he resisted the officer and wounded him by a pistol shot. He came to Rochester, N. Y., and obtaining employment at his trade, as stone mason, sent for his family. It is said that it was here he first conceived the idea of publishing a pretended expose of Free-masonry, and thus improving his embarrassed circumstances, in a financial point of view, by the sale of such a work. Before his family arrived in Rochester, he boarded at the house of a man by the name of Whitney, a brother of John Whitney, who was afterwards implicated, tried and convicted for his abduction. While boarding at Whitney's, Morgan went to New York City, for some purpose best known to himself, and on his return he

got very drunk at Albany, and in that condition went aboard of a canal boat, and as the Captain said, "did not get sober till he reached Rochester." In his maudlin condition, he left at a hotel in Albany a package, which was found to consist of a copy of a book entitled "*Jachin and Boaz*," and also the works of Abbe Burrelle, an exiled Jesuit from France, who published in England, in 1799, a pretended exposition of Free masonry and the esoteric ritual of an order which had been suppressed in France and Germany called the "*Illuminati*." The copy of "*Jachin and Boaz*" was of the edition printed in 1814, and which was a reprint from several editions previously published in England.\* This package was returned to Morgan by Mr. Whitney who was at Albany soon after Morgan's return to Rochester. Morgan at some time, it is supposed in Virginia, had received some of the degrees in masonry. It was doubtful, however, that he had ever taken more than the first in a regular way, but it seems that he satisfied the members of the Lodge at Rochester that he had received three, and was admitted to the Lodge. Emboldened by this success, he afterward convinced the Chapter at Le Roy that he had received six degrees and was there exalted to the Royal Arch degree.

Morgan moved to Batavia in January, 1826, and soon he and Miller were boon companions. Miller was not a mason, although he claimed he had received the entered apprentice degree some years before at Albany. A masonic writer has described the masonic standing of these two men as follows: "Miller had taken one step inside the door, and Morgan had climbed over the wall." Morgan, after moving to Batavia, induced Blanchard Powers, the Grand

\* An edition of "*Jachin and Boaz*" was published in New York in 1814 by "E. Dyckinck, 102 Pearl Street—Nicholas" and Ripper, Printer,"—a reprint of the London edition of 1750.

Lecturer of the State of New York, to give him a course of instruction, by which means he was enabled to pass himself, without difficulty, as a mason among all intelligent brethren. Morgan and Miller then entered into partnership to print a book which the public was to be told disclosed the secrets of masonry, in hopes to make a fortune out of the gaping curiosity of the vulgar. But as neither had the money to issue the work, they were obliged to let others into the firm. John Davids, of Batavia, and Russell Dyer, of Rochester, having been applied to, readily saw it would be a good speculation, and advanced the necessary means to put the work through the press. Morgan seems to have penetrated the mercenary motives of his partners and required of them to subscribe and swear to the following oath:

"We, and each of us, do hereby most solemnly, and sincerely promise and swear, upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that we will never divulge during our natural lives, communicate or make known to any person in the known world, our knowledge, or any part thereof, respecting William Morgan's intention (communicated to us) to publish a book on the subject of Free masonry, neither by writing, marking or insinuation, or any way devisable by man.

"Sworn and subscribed this 13th day of March, 1826.

[Signed.]

JOHN. DAVIDS,  
RUSSELL DYER,  
D. C. MILLER,"

#### THE BOOK ADVERTISED.

In the Summer of 1826, Miller issued a prospectus and announced in the columns of the "Republican Advocate," that Morgan had written out a full and complete illustration of the esoteric part of Free-masonry, together with the secret ritual and lectures pertaining thereto, which would, when published, bring everything to light concealed

by the members of the fraternity, and that it would in a short time be issued from his press and be on sale at \$1.00 per copy.

#### HOW MASONS VIEWED THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

This announcement created wonder and perhaps commotion in the various masonic bodies wherever the paper circulated, but the greater portion of the respectable members of the fraternity treated the matter with silence and contempt. But others were not so wise. While there were those outside of the Order elated that an opportunity would now be given to learn all about the mysteries of the "inner chamber" which had been so long and carefully locked in the breasts of the initiated, there were some indiscreet members who determined to prevent the publication of the proposed book.

#### A RIFFLE IN THE QUARTETTE.

About the first of August by some means Morgan discovered something, that made him suspicious that his three partners designed to swindle him. Therefore he writes them the following letter:

"AUGUST 7, 1826.

"GENTLEMEN:—My note of this morning has not been answered. Further evasion and equivocation I will not submit to. Acknowledge you are not gentlemen, or I will expose you in twelve hours, unless you do as you have agreed to do. I am not a child—if you suppose I am you are mistaken. I am a man and will not suffer myself to be imposed upon; you have not acted as gentlemen. I am sorry to be compelled to say it. Every part of your conduct has been mysterious, and why so? My first impressions were that you were not honest men; therefore I wish to settle and have no more to do with you. If either of you feel hurt, call on me, as gentlemen, and I will give you any satisfaction you wish.

[Signed.]

WILLIAM MORGAN."



This bellicose epistle appears to have frightened the triumvirate speculators in book publishing, but Morgan was quieted by Dyer and Davids executing to him a bond in the penal sum of five hundred thousand dollars conditioned for the payment of one-fourth part of the sum which should be received on the sale of the proposed book. Another partner was soon after received into the company, for the sake of more capital. His name was David Johns, but it seems he did not furnish the capital as he agreed, as a quarrel again arose, and came very near breaking up the whole enterprise. Morgan, who I have heretofore remarked, had a peculiar faculty for getting into debt and never getting out, was at this time very much harrassed by his creditors. On the 25th of July he was arrested and confined within the jail limits of Batavia at the suit of one of these creditors. It will be remembered that the law for imprisonment for debt had not at that time been abolished in New York. His partners were compelled to bail him out. But other creditors instituted proceedings and they became alarmed lest the amount of security they were compelled to assume, would take up more than Morgan's share of the profits in the sale of the book.

#### CHEAP ADVERTISING.

It was the policy of Miller and his confederates, together with an Anti-masonic cabal which had been already formed, to make it appear that the masons were devising various schemes to prevent the publication of the book. Among other assertions it was declared that De Witt Clinton, then Governor of New York, as the head of the Grand Chapter of the State, had issued a masonic edict for suppressing the work, "even at the expense of life!" Monstrous as this was it was believed, or pretended to be be-

lieved, by many who had a craving, morbid curiosity to see what the book would contain. Instead of Governor Clinton ever having issued such an edict, the facts are, a prominent mason at Batavia, a warm personal and intimate friend of the Governor's, wrote him a private letter asking his advice as to the duty of masons in regard to the forthcoming book, provided it did disclose any of the esoteric ritual of the institution. The reply of Governor Clinton was, for masons to let the subject alone, and permit the book to take its course. He said that Morgan nor any other mason or Anti-mason could injure or affect the principles and benevolent purposes of the institution, and that these were the vital force that gave it value. Owing to the confidential nature of this correspondence it has never been published, but I have authority for saying that it was read in many of the Lodges in Genesee and other counties. If all masons had been as wise as the Governor, Morgan and his confederates would have lived thereafter as obscure as their former lives had been, and have sunk into oblivion after their death.

#### MOB INTERFERENCE.

While Morgan and Miller, as they had announced, were at work on their publication in Miller's office, (on the 8th of September,) a few inconsiderate members of the masonic fraternity, in an evil hour, attempted a plan for its suppression. Before they knew what really was the character or extent of the intended disclosures, or that it would disclose anything in violation of masonic obligations, forty or fifty persons, in disguise, assembled at Miller's office with the avowed purpose of destroying the office if necessary, and burning the manuscript, and such portions of the work as might already be in print. This attempt failing, the office

was set on fire and partially consumed. It should be stated here that the most respectable members of the Lodge and Chapter at Batavia, condemned these proceedings and joined in a printed handbill offering a reward of one hundred dollars for the apprehension of the incendiaries.

It has been claimed by many, if not all the masonic writers upon this part of the Morgan History, that these unlawful proceedings were instituted by Miller and his partners to increase the excitement and advance the sale of the work. If such were the facts, it must be acknowledged they were eminently successful, because the parties which composed this mob were undoubtedly masons, at least the public so understood it. The crisis soon came.

#### MORGAN ARRESTED AS A CRIMINAL.

In May, 1826, Morgan visited certain influential masons in Canandaigua, Ontario county, and under the pretence of traveling in the Southern States, induced them to further instruct him, and perfect him in the rites and ceremonies of the Order. About the first of September these masons learned of his intended expose, and were indignant at the infamous conduct of the man and naturally desired to get even with him. While at Canandaigua, Morgan had borrowed a "shirt" and "cravat," but conveniently forgot to return them. On the 10th of September, an information was filed with ——— Sheldon, Esq., a justice of the peace, at Canandaigua, charging Morgan with stealing a "shirt" and "cravat" from Mr. Kingley. A warrant for his arrest was issued in due form directing "any Constable or the Sheriff of the County to bring said Morgan, before said Justice, to answer said complaint," and "to be dealt with according to law." The warrant was first given to N. G. Cheesebro, coroner of the county, but he turned it over

to Hollaway Hayward, a Constable, who proceeded to Batavia, (about fifty miles distance,) made the arrest, and brought his prisoner to Canandaigua, arriving there on the evening of the 11th. On the trial the Justice decided that borrowing a shirt and cravat was not larceny, and Morgan was discharged. But those who had undertaken to get Morgan into jail found another remedy to accomplish it. Morgan was indebted for board on his former visit to Canandaigua, to Mr. Ackley, a hotel keeper, who had assigned his claim to another party. This party immediately on the discharge of Morgan for larceny, swore out a claim against him "in debt." A *Capias ad respondendum* was issued, upon which proceedings a judgment was rendered and execution forthwith issued.

#### MORGAN SENT TO JAIL.

The laws of New York, as before stated, then authorized the imprisonment for debt. All executions commanded the sheriff or constable, if sufficient property of the judgment debtor could not be found to satisfy the judgment and costs, to take the body of the defendant to the common jail of the county, "there to be confined until said judgment and costs are paid, or he be discharged according to law." Morgan was taken to the jail about eleven o'clock at night on the 11th day of September, 1826, and handed over to Israel R. Hall, deputy sheriff, and keeper of the jail, who resided with his family in the prison, placed in a cell and locked up. Here he remained till the next evening, September 12th.

#### HOW HE GOT OUT.

About seven o'clock on this evening, Mr. Loton Lawson called at the jail, as appears by the testimony of Mrs. Mary W. Hall, wife of the jailor, and desired to see Mor-

gan. Mr. Hall was absent, and she conducted Lawson to Morgan's cell, where he had some private conversation with him. Mrs. Hall said she heard Lawson ask Morgan if he would go home with him if he would pay the debt and take him out. Morgan said he would. Lawson then offered to pay the amount of the execution, but she declined, afraid Mr. Hall would be injured, and told Lawson he must go out and find her husband. He went away, but returned soon and offered to leave considerable more money than was sufficient to pay the claim if she would let Morgan go. She still declined and Col. Sawyer and Mr. Cheesebro came and told her it was all right, when she consented. She then unlocked the prison door, and Morgan and Lawson marched out arm in arm into the street. Before she got the jail door locked she heard the cry of murder once or twice and on looking out saw Morgan struggling between two men. They forced him along the sidewalk east of the jail, and were soon hidden from her view by the next house. She then saw a carriage pass the jail, going east, which shortly after returned, going west. "It was moonlight and near nine o'clock when Morgan was taken from the jail."

Mr. Lawson, who took so leading a part in the discharge of Morgan, according to the testimony of Mrs. Hall, was a farmer residing near Canandaigua. Mr. Cheesebro and Col. Sawyer were business men in Canandaigua, the first kept a hat and cap store, the latter a saddle and harness maker. They were all highly respectable citizens, of whom no discreditable act had ever been previously charged against them. The trial and conviction of these three men will be referred to hereafter.

#### THE "ABDUCTION."

As Mrs. Hall states, Morgan left the jail with Lawson,

Cheesebro and Sawyer. There was also another person who took part in the transaction, who was called at the time "Dr. Foster," but who was never afterwards discovered or identified. He was a stranger to Mrs. Hall, and also to Dr. Richard Wells, who was on the sidewalk in front of the jail, and saw Morgan as he was put into the carriage. These two witnesses said they had never before seen him and never had since. This mysterious "abductor" is a mystery to this day.

The testimony of others besides Mrs. Hall, showed that when they left the jail with Morgan, they walked a few steps down the street where the latter was forced into a carriage and driven out of the village. The question of his voluntary entrance into the carriage, or that violence was used to make him enter, the evidence is very conflicting. Mr. Lawson claimed that Morgan desired to go, and agreed willingly to be taken to Canada, away from Miller and his other partners in the contemplated book publication. He said "that Morgan reproached himself bitterly for suffering himself to be the dupe of these men who only had made a tool of him for their own benefit." Lawson also said upon leaving the jail that Morgan entered the carriage willingly, and made no out-cry, but Mrs. Hall, it will be seen, says she heard the cry of "murder," and is confirmed by Dr. Wells, then a highly respected physician of Canandaigua, and who happened to be near the jail at the time, and also by a citizen living next door to the jail. Dr. Wells testified that he heard the cry of "murder" twice and that Mr. Cheesebro told him, on his inquiring what the matter was, "that they had been liberating a man in jail on an execution of his, and that he was taken with a 'jail piece,' but did not like to go." The other witness said he

"saw a man forced into the carriage." On the other hand, Hiram Hubbard, the owner and driver of the carriage, testified that he observed "no force exercised to put any one into the carriage—heard no cry of 'murder.'" Lawson, Cheesebro and Sawyer confirmed Hubbard that no force was used. The general opinion among the friends of the "abductors" was, that the statement of Lawson was correct so far that Morgan did agree, while in jail, and was anxious to go to Canada, in order to get away from his partners, but the moment he reached freedom from the prison bars, he suddenly changed his mind and refused to comply with the compact, but that Lawson, Cheesebro, Sawyer and "Dr. Foster" determined he should "fulfill the bond." But it appears he became subsequently reconciled to the wishes of his "abductors," as during the whole journey to the frontier there was no restraint put upon his movements, and seemed to be entirely free to go where he pleased until locked again in another prison hereafter mentioned.

#### THE JOURNEY TO NIAGARA.

The testimony of Hubbard, the owner and driver of the carriage, was, that he was hired to go to Rochester and take five passengers—that he proceeded to Rochester and got there about daylight—and went about three miles beyond, where he was told his services were no longer needed, when he returned, and was subsequently paid by Cheesebro. The carriage after taking in Morgan near the jail, was driven down Jail street about sixty rods east of the prison, near an old frame building, which was called "Mechanic's Hall," where four men were taken up; when it turned round, re-passing the jail and on reaching Main street, near the Court House and "Town House," turned

north. At Ackley's tavern, at the north end of Main street, a man in a sulky joined the carriage, and the two vehicles left the village. A few miles out the carriage overtook John Whitney on foot. This gentleman got up and rode with the driver to Victor. Here the driver halted at Beach's tavern and watered his horses, and some of the party went into the house and "took a drink." The driver also stopped at Mendon and Pittsford and gave water to his horses, but no one got out of the carriage at either place, and, as before stated, arrived at Rochester about daylight. This was as far as Hubbard had been employed to convey the party, but after a consultation he was requested to go on three miles further, to Hanford's Landing. He complied and on reaching that point, about eighty rods beyond Hanford's house, near a piece of woods, he discharged his passengers and returned. Another carriage from Rochester was just behind which took up Hubbard's passengers and proceeded west on the "Ridge road." This road, so called, runs on the apex of a considerable ridge, and extends from the Genesee river, at Hanford's, to the Niagara, about seventy-five miles. The horses were changed at regular relays and about sundown, the carriage arrived at Wright's tavern, three miles north of Lockport, where Eli Bruce, Sheriff of Niagara county, met the party, and who then seemed to take command of the future movements. At nine o'clock the company arrived at Molyneux's tavern, near Lewiston, where a Mr. Brown, who had been driver from Ridgeway, discharged his load and returned. But another carriage was procured to go to Youngstown, which was driven to Col. King's, about six miles from Lewiston. The Colonel here joined the party, and about half a mile from Fort Niagara, the party left the carriage and proceeded on foot to the fort.



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**A HISTORIC MILITARY POST.**

This old fort had had something of a historical record and romantic interest attached to it. It was first built by the French prior to the French and Indian war of 1756, captured by the British during that war and retaken by the French. During our revolution it was occupied by the British troops, but fell into the hands of our government after the peace of 1783. In the war of 1812 an expedition from Canada crossed over and captured Youngstown, and the fort surrendered, but was subsequently recaptured by our forces. The fort stands upon the point where the river opens into Lake Ontario. The fort had been occupied as a garrison for U. S. troops until the previous May, when the troops were ordered to other points, and the government property left in charge of one Edward Giddings, the keeper of the light house, at that point.

**THE LAST OF MORGAN.**

When Bruce, King, and two others with Morgan, arrived at the fort they were joined by Giddings and all went across the river in the ferry boat to the Canada shore, but not finding the parties they expected returned to this side and Morgan was put into the magazine, within the fort, and locked up. The old magazine had been in its day a massive structure with walls of seven to eight feet of solid masonry, but had become at the time Morgan was confined there, as well as the fort, very much delapidated.

**FINAL DISAPPEARANCE OF MORGAN.**

By the testimony in the trials that took place afterward there can be no reasonable doubt that Morgan was taken, either by his own will or by force, to this magazine and there confined, but what became of him, how he was disposed of, or how he disposed of himself, no authentic

account has ever been known or divulged to the public, and the mystery is just as great now as it was forty-six years ago. If there were any who did know, and it is hardly possible otherwise, they have or will let the secret die with them. It is most probable in some manner he ceased to live, although there are thousands of instances of persons in his situation, and of his standing, who have wished to leave the impression of their death that they might emigrate or transmigrate and come out unknown, and unquestioned, under another name, and to enact another part in life.

#### REPORTS, RUMORS AND THEORIES.

For two or three years reports and rumors were now and then circulated in the newspapers, that Morgan had been seen and recognized in Canada, living under an assumed name—then he was located in some country in Europe, in Mexico, California, and other parts of the world. It was positively asserted at one time that Morgan had been actually found, and was living as a high dignitary in Turkey in 1831, where he had become a *Maitre d' Ecole* to a class of Oriental Musselmen at Smyrna, and was teaching the English and French languages to the Sultan's officials. Even the vessel in which he had sailed from the United States was given as the "Brig Minerva, owned by Western, of Duxbury, Mass. The Captain's name was Martin Waterman." In the "National Freemason," of 1867, this report is republished as a probable solution of the Morgan mystery. But we should hardly suppose that any intelligent person would for a moment have been deceived by such an evident absurdity. Morgan must have been from all accounts, when he disappeared, over fifty years of age, and had never received anything more than the simple

rudiments of an English education. It would therefore be the height of folly to suppose that he could in four years have learned the Turkish language, and qualified himself to teach even the English language, to say nothing about the French of which he did not probably know the first accent. In July, 1829, one Ezra Sturges Anderson, of Hollowell, Maine, published over his own signature a statement that he, in the previous April, had met Morgan at "Mt. Deseret Island," in the Gulf of St. Lawrence—that he had known him in 1825, and that he could not be mistaken, as he had a conversation with him, and that Morgan told him he had been living in Newfoundland—that Miller had in his hands money belonging to him to the amount of \$20,000, and that if he did not remit to him soon he would return to Batavia, etc.

There was but little credit given to such statements, whether made over the signatures of individuals, or having no particular paternity. Many were probably invented by some joker, knowing that the public excitement was at such a pitch that the most improbable story would attract attention. But there were no lacking of those who believed that Morgan got himself kidnapped, taken to the frontier, and then safely departed the country, leaving the impression behind that he had been murdered, in order to get up the very excitement which followed, to enhance the sale of his book.

But this was not the general impression. The public which was familiar with all the circumstances had an abiding conviction that he was murdered; even among the fraternity, who held the institution in great veneration, there were not a few who admitted that he had been put of the way by indiscreet and bad members of the

Order; and that if such was the case, they were not only base criminals by the civil law, but had heinously violated every principle of masonic obligations. And, until there was an indiscriminating vengeance inaugurated against all who belonged to the Order, they were as forward as the most violent opposers, to bring the guilty to justice. The thousand and one theories in regard to the disposal of Morgan that were originated by both friends and foes, were wild and sometimes incredible, yet many of them seemed sufficient to produce conviction. That those who took so active a part in taking him to Niagara, their high standing and unblemished reputations in the communities where they were known, forbade all candid individuals for a moment to believe they were guilty of murder, but under the intense excitement and fury of the persecution of everybody connected with masonic bodies, reason was over-set, and the fanaticism of the hour was their only excuse for their violence. This many of them acknowledged after the excitement was over. But while the excitement was in progress this class could not be made even to admit of a possibility that Morgan was not horribly murdered and his body sunk in the Niagara river or the adjacent waters of Lake Ontario. The theory among most of them was that he was kept a close prisoner in the magazine from the night of the 13th of September until the 20th of the same month, without much or any food or water; that at the meeting of masons for the installation of a chapter at Lewiston, on the 14th, the subject of his disposal was discussed—by some it was contended that this meeting was held for no other purpose than to consider how he should be put out of the way—that it was solemnly agreed there that he should be put to death, and all the details arranged to hide the

dark deed from the public gaze: the ruffians chosen and required to execute the sentence pronounced; that these ruffians did perform the behest of the conclave, and on the night of the 20th, Morgan was taken from his prison already half dead for want of sustenance and from confinement, was dispatched and his body sunk in the deep. This theory, we say, was the one most believed by the opponents of masoury during the excitement, although many others were formed and reiterated among all classes of people still more ridiculous. That several hundred respectable Freemasons, who were present at the Lewiston installation, could unanimously conspire, plan and execute a heinous murder of a human being, it is strange that so many could have honestly believed. But undoubtedly they did, and were so firmly convinced of its truth that they would not listen or permit it to be doubted. Yet if they had reflected a moment they must have discovered the improbability of such an enormity, without its certain detection and being fully brought to light. There were all classes of men, members of the fraternity, at the Lewiston installation, and the meeting had been appointed months before by an official of the Grand Chapter, when there could have been no knowledge of Morgan or his intended book. The meeting was an ordinary one, common to the Order on like occasions in organizing new Chapters, and the usual ceremonies, with procession, etc., took place. Among that large throng of Royal Arch Masons, with one single exception, all positively declared that during the private session the name of Morgan, or his intended book, was not mentioned, and it may be easily inferred that not more than four or five knew that Morgan was confined at Ft. Niagara, if they had even heard of him at all. If Morgan's death had been de-

creed and adjudged in that assembly, and his execution afterwards consummated on the 20th, was it possible for the deed to have been forever concealed from the public? Many of those who were at the Lewiston meeting, and were present at all private sessions of the Lodge and Chapter, there held, afterwards during the excitement, renounced masonry, but every one, except Edward Giddings, solemnly averred the subject was not mentioned. Had there been anything of the kind, it is impossible to believe that it would not have been disclosed, when we remember with what zeal the Anti-masonic committee labored to prove that the horrible tragedy of murder was there arranged.

On the other hand, the theory of those who still cherished the principle of masonry, as well as those who were not masons but were opposed to the persecution of the Order for the misdeeds of a few misguided members, was that a great outrage against law had been committed, for which the perpetrators deserved condign punishment.—They were divided, however, as to whether an actual murder had been committed—many prominent and influential masons believed as firmly as the Anti-masons that Morgan had been murdered, but knew that the Order, or anything more than a few members of it, were not guilty of the enormous crime, while the anties charged the whole fraternity as accessories. Others believed that the whole conspiracy and abduction was gotten up by Miller and his confederates, to stamp the impress of truth upon the pretended disclosures of Morgan, to add to the sale of the work, and that Giddings was one of their tools, and who shared in the profits of the venture. But all was speculation and the truth has never been made public. We will give the opinions of two distinguished masons, made up long after the

excitement had ceased and the Order had been fully reinstated in localities where it had been completely obliterated during that period, and who could have no object in screening any members or the institution from deserved censure.

Dr. J. W. S. Mitchell, P. G. M. of Missouri, in his "History of Free-masonry, and Masonic Digest," thus sums up his opinion of the Morgan affair:

"That William Morgan was murdered, we sincerely believe, and that one or more masons were concerned, and participated in the hellish deed, we have no reason to doubt. But for what purpose? Was it to defend, or protect masonry from the influence of a book, a copy of which could be had for a few pennies, in nearly all the bookstores of England and America? No; but for the sole purpose of putting money in their purse! What if rumor did say that Morgan was about to publish an *expose* of masonry, we doubt whether any honest mason was permitted to see the original copy, whether manuscript or the book *Jachin and Boaz*, and hence the masons could not know what was about to be published, and surely no sane man would suffer himself to be guilty of murder, upon a bare suspicion of treachery. In any view we can take of the subject, we can find no reason to fix the crime of Morgan's murder upon any except those who were base enough to participate with him in the scheme, and who sought money as the reward of their villainy!"

Dr. Rob. Morris, well known throughout the Western States as a distinguished instructor and masonic author, thus furnishes his conclusions of "Who Killed Morgan:"

"Our own surmise, which, after a careful perusal of all the testimony, and much questioning of the remaining actors in the abduction who still survive, may perhaps be as good as any other, is that Morgan was abundantly supplied with money by those who had expended so much and run such risks to separate him from Miller and his confederates, and that he was assisted to pass into Canada, the

scene of his former adventures, where among a rough and lawless population, he met the fate likely to befall a drunken boasting fellow, whose pockets were sufficiently well lined to render him a desirable prey."

We might add another theory of a mason who was familiar with all the circumstances, and is at least as reasonable as any other. It is this: That Morgan agreed, as positively affirmed by those engaged in his abduction, to be carried to Canada away from Miller and his partners, who he claimed had not acted honorably with him, and that with the promise of being helped into a good business in Canada, where Miller could not find him, he being as anxious to go as those misguided Masons were that he should; that certain zealous Canadian masons received him and passed him along to Quebec, and there shipped him on a man of war, or perhaps a merchant vessel bound to some distant land, and that he either died a natural death, or fell overboard and was drowned at sea before the vessel returned, and having been registered under an assumed name was never heard of more by those who had known him. This of course is all speculation, but is entitled to just as much credit as any other theory which has ever before been published.

We will now proceed to narrate events that occurred after Morgan disappeared.

#### THE PUBLIC INQUIRE "WHERE IS MORGAN?"

The first inquiry came from Batavia where Morgan had resided and where his family still lived. The mystery attending his departure—the circumstance of his having not been heard from—the attempted mobbing of Miller's office, and the partial incendiary burning of the same a few days after, and rumors afloat that he had forcibly been taken



to Niagara and there murdered, excited an interest in the people of Batavia, and very properly and justly made an investigation necessary.

With a view to ascertain the circumstances in relation to Morgan's being taken from the jail in Canandaigua, an agent was sent thither to make inquiries. A number of affidavits were procured which established the fact apparently that Morgan was arrested in violation of law after his discharge from prison on the 12th of September, and against his will, conveyed from thence in a carriage, prepared for that purpose, by force, to the Niagara frontier.

Here was the starting point for the furious excitement which followed. Reports and rumors in exaggerated forms continued to reach Batavia until it was the popular belief that Morgan had been murdered in cold blood. "The thunders of popular indignation began to roll. It was at first in low and solemn murmurs, but destined in a short time to increase in power. It emitted as yet no sparks, because no particular object had yet been selected on which its bolts could descend. The inquiry everywhere was made, "Where is Morgan?" but no answer had been given.

#### THE FIRST MEETING.

A public meeting was called at Batavia on the 4th of October for the purpose of making some arrangements in order to ascertain his fate. Mr. Henry Brown, an attorney-at law, at Batavia, N. Y., who was one of the active participants in this meeting, soon after wrote: "It was a solemn and impressive scene. A citizen of this free land had been taken by violence and confined without authority, in some solitary place, or conveyed by force without the United States to parts unknown, or had fallen beneath some murderer's arm, and no information relative to his destiny or

fate had yet been received. The circumstances that he was poor—that he was dissolute—that he was in some respects unprincipled, and therefore held in but little estimation by the community, gave to the meeting, in the eye of the philanthropist, additional interest. Had he been a man of rank, of consideration, or of fortune, he would have been followed—he would have been rescued, and if necessary, an army would have been raised at his call, and awaited his command. The wrongs of an individual once rocked the battlements of Troy, and made the throne of Priam tremble to its base. But the unfortunate and degraded Morgan was suffered to be carried off under circumstances calculated to excite the strongest suspicions with scarce an inquiry."

Mr. Brown, although not himself a mason, avers that at this meeting, of those who took an active part in the proceedings, that some of the more respectable Free-masons were the foremost to institute an investigation, and declared that if any members of the Order had been guilty of kidnapping and murdering Morgan, or whoever had committed such an outrage, should be punished to the full extent of the law, and he then adds: "I regret that I cannot in justice forbear to remark that a number of the most conspicuous Anti masons in the county; men who became so long after Morgan's abduction, and who have since participated in the rewards and honors of a triumphant party, designedly abstained from this meeting, nor can I in justice to my own feelings, suffer this occasion to pass without applauding in the highest terms, the candor, good sense, and above all, the holy fervor which appeared to inspire and expand the bosoms of the great mass of which it was composed. A writer of eminence, I believe Mr. Burke, observed

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on the public mind is often wrong, but the public feeling never. An outrage of thought had been committed, but its extent and nature were unknown. An inquiry was commenced—the public indignation was aroused, and the detection and punishment of the guilty seemed to be the only object. A search was at once organized to take such action as they seemed necessary to bring the guilty to justice. But these wholesome measures were soon interrupted by more violent proceedings.

"MORRIS'S BOOK."

With the appearance from Morris's press soon after the outbreak of secession, a "Flying" perhaps ten cents, and with the greedy public appetite swallowed to a surfeit for some time at the price of one dollar." The book was a masterpiece in its typographical appearance, and its matter a jumble of inconsistencies and absurdities. It certainly would at any other time have attracted but little notice. It contained the same matter as that published in New York, in 1814, with some addition taken from a work published at Lancaster, Pa. in 1812. This latter book was a large volume of 428 pages, by "Joseph Ehrenfried, printer," and entitled "The Anti-Christian and Social Conspiracy, an extract from the French of Abbe Burrelle; to which is prefixed 'Jachin and Boaz,' or an Authentic key to the door of Free masonry—Ancient and Modern." This Lancaster publication does not seem to have been much of a success, as it is reported but few sales ever took place and the book entailed a heavy loss upon the publisher. The public refused to recognize it only as an imposition and supposed that the author had drawn upon his imagination instead of truly representing the secret rites of masonry. The work of Morgan, however, was interlarded with extracts from the text-

books and "Monitors" of the Craft in common use, of which the public was as familiar outside as the initiated inside. This was claimed by those who wished to have it so, as an undisputed evidence that it was a *true* exposition, and without further thought declared it to be established, and people might as well question the authenticity of the Bible as "Morgan's Book!"

## LEROY CONVENTION.

A few months after Morgan's Book was before the public a number of Free-masons, either from mercenary or other motives resolved to join with the Anti-masons to break down the institution. Elder David Barnard seems to have been their leader. They assembled at Leroy in a convention on the 19th of February, 1827, and then declared their renunciation and their connection with the Order. Elder Barnard in his "Light on Masonry" states that there were forty masons present at this meeting—other authorities say there were not more than ten or twelve, and that some of these had been expelled for unmasonic conduct, and that if forty individuals took part in this meeting the majority were not and never had been masons. They solemnly enacted that Free-masonry was a wicked institution and that it had murdered Morgan, and was capable of doing all sorts of abominations if permitted to exist. They made arrangements for the publishing of a revised edition of all the pretended expositions of masonry that had been produced for the past two hundred years, appointed committees for a general crusade against the institution, and adjourned to meet again on the fourth of July.

The popular feeling was now ripe for the excitement which followed, which has scarcely a parallel in this or any civilized country. Anti-masonic committees had been

formed in the several counties, with the avowed object to discover the mystery of Morgan's exit and bring the guilty to punishment. These committees met and commenced their work at Lewiston in March, 1827, and a complete organization was effected to drive the masonic institution from the land.

This committee caused notices to be published containing statements of facts and circumstances, so far as ascertained, and desired all who possessed any knowledge or information whatever in relation to either the abduction or murder of Morgan, to communicate the same without delay to some one of the committee. A request was also sent to Governor Clinton, desiring his aid. It was promptly granted and a proclamation immediately issued, offering a reward of \$2,000, and requiring the aid of every law-abiding citizen, and granting pardon to accomplices, that should give evidence in the case.

On the other hand the masonic bodies everywhere disclaimed all knowledge or approval of the outrage, and the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of New York at its Annual Convocation in February, 1827, in which more than one hundred subordinate Chapters were represented, passed, unanimously, the following resolution:

**"RESOLVED,** By this Grand Chapter, that we, its members, individually, and as a body, do disclaim all knowledge or approbation of proceedings in relation to the abduction of William Morgan, and that we disapprove of the same as a violation of the majesty of the laws, and an infringement on the rights of personal liberty secured to every citizen of our free and happy republic."

Similar resolutions were passed in most of the subordinate Chapters in the State, and also by many of the blue lodges, who avowed their most solemn condemnation of all

who had been engaged in such unlawful proceedings. Some of them at once instituted proceedings to summon their members who were charged as having been connected with the abduction, and the highest penalty known to masonic law—expulsion—was inflicted in several cases. These measures, however, were scouted as insincere, and the Anti-masons would listen to nothing save the entire destruction of the institution.

#### POLITICAL ANTI-MASONRY.

The excited state of the public mind was now seized upon by certain ambitious and unscrupulous politicians to organize a political party whereby they hoped to ride into power. Through the seceders' convention, at Leroy, and the Anti-masonic committee, as organized at Lewiston, the germ of a powerful political party was formed. Thurlow Weed, then editor of a small newspaper, at Rochester, changed its name to the "Anti-Masonic Inquirer," and became a most prominent and active leader. The great talents and energy of Weed as a journalist and political leader, soon brought the organization into complete working order. He was assisted by many of the most effective and talented men of Western New York, among whom were Wm. H. Seward, Francis Granger, John C. Spencer, Myron Holley, Frederick Whittlesey, Robert S. Rose, Solomon Southwick, Albert H. Tracy, and others. The plan was to arouse every passion in the masses and embitter them against the institution of Free-masonry and all secret societies. For this purpose they determined to make the most out of the Morgan affair. They proclaimed that Morgan was abducted pursuant to the requirements of Masonry. They asserted, and the assertion was reiterated, that the whole fraternity were chargeable with shedding his blood.



That even the skirts of the illustrious Governor of New York were not clear. No efforts were spared to make the people believe these tales.

#### A GENERAL CRUSADE

was commenced against masonry. Where the established newspapers would not support the Anti-masonic party, nor denounce all secret societies, as inimical to free government, new presses were set up and every county in the central and western part of the State had its organ red-hot for the strife. For instance, in Canandaigua there were two old established newspapers—the “Repository” and “Messenger”—the former “National Republican” in politics, and supporting John Quincy Adams for re-election to the Presidency—the latter “Democratic,” and supporting Gen. Jackson. Neither of these papers would espouse the cause of anti-masonry, and the anties in Ontario county were without an organ. But it was not long before a new press and type were procured and a genuine Anti-masonic paper started by one W. W. Phelps, assisted by Francis Granger and Stephen Bates. Phelps called his paper the “Phoenix,” and it was conducted with all the bitterness of his nature. It would astonish some readers of the present day to read the blasphemous editorials that he put forth. He continued the publication of the paper until political Anti masonry began to wane in 1830, when he joined Joe Smith and his Mormon band, went to Jackson county, Mo., where he commenced a Mormon publication, and died a raving maniac. As in Ontario, so it was in other counties, and the party had more organs in the State of New York than any other party ever had before. Among the most influential and strong ones of these organs were Thurlow Weed’s “Anti-masonic Enquirer” and Solomon Southwick’s “National

Observer," at Albany. The others were mostly subordinate to and mere echoes of these master journalists. As a specimen of the spirit of these leaders the following extract from Southwick will give an idea with what literary food they furnished the people:

"Anti-masonry sprung from the throne of God, and under His Almighty wings, it will conquer 'Hell's master piece,' and redeem our country from vile slavery and galling chains—from eternal disgrace; from everlasting ruin and degradation. The man who hesitates to support such a cause, stabs his country and dishonors his creator. Let no such man be trusted—let him live neglected and die unpitied and despised, and let no monument tell his name or point to the spot where his recreant ashes pollute the soil that gave him birth."

These worthies—Weed and Southwick—like loving brothers continued giving tone to the Anti-masonic press and shaping all the policy of the party, until Weed removed to Albany in 1830 and took charge of the Journal, when he and Southwick soon quarrelled, and Weed drove his former coadjutor from the tripod.

#### THE LAW INVOKED.

Warrants were issued and trials instituted without number, and each succeeding day brought to light a new brood of stories of violence, blood and murder. "While one of these trials was going on at Batavia against some one who was supposed to have been connected with the affair, with a hundred or more witnesses subpoenaed, a rumor was set afloat that Morgan's body had been found, and would be present at the place of trial, while every other tale that could possibly inflame the passions of the multitude, was invoked and set afloat. Like a seething cauldron the upheaving of public opinion was aroused against the

preparation of the murder and their assistance. By this time the excitement had settled in the minds of many persons and associations and the political leaders were active. Their messages were filled in the several counties and a mob formation organization was effected.

The Anti-masonic committee went to work to take the bodies from and a portion of the waters of Lake Ontario. It became absolutely necessary for them to find Morgan's body or to determine for certain that he had not the extraordinary privilege. This business was conducted with great zeal for some months, but no Morgan was found, yet

A BODY WAS FOUND

was the corpse of Oak Orchard Creek on the shore of Lake Ontario, which appeared to have been left there by the waves. Being in a high state of decomposition, it was feared. It was spread throughout the surrounding country that it was Morgan's body. The Anti-masonic committee headed by Wood and Whittlesey, of Rochester, repaired to the place of burial. The body was disinterred. Mrs. Morgan was conveyed from Batavia to Oak Orchard, and other witnesses subpoenaed from even a greater distance. The body having been dead, as it was afterward proved, more than six months, it was in a poor condition to be identified, except perhaps, by its clothing, teeth, hair or height. In neither of these did it correspond nor resemble Morgan. Mrs. Morgan at once declared that the clothes were not the ones her husband wore when he left Batavia. But the Anti-masonic committee were determined to have it pronounced Morgan's. A jury of inquest was empannelled and witnesses examined, when thirteen persons were sworn who all deposed that they knew it to be the body of that individual. Mrs. Morgan was induced to

confirm the other witnesses, but was much less decided in her opinion.

The jury brought in a verdict that it was the mortal remains of William Morgan, and that he came to his death by drowning. All doubts now were declared removed from the public mind. The multitude flocked to the funeral procession. The body was removed to Batavia under the auspices of the Anti-masonic committee, and a pompous funeral held, after which it was again interred. "The cry of vengeance against the masons was now on the breeze, and the ghost of Morgan was said to walk."

But the story spread and the newspapers carried the intelligence even to the other side of the border, until it reached the ears of the real widow of the drowned man. A man by the name of Timothy Monroe, living at Newark, Canada, in attempting to cross the Niagara river on the ice the spring previous, had been drowned. A description of the clothes found on the supposed body of Morgan, induced Mrs. Monroe to believe it was the body of her drowned husband. She therefore in company with some friends repaired to Batavia and demanded a re-investigation. The ill-fated body which was not allowed to remain quiet in the waters where the soul had left it, was not permitted to lie in peace in earth, and was again disinterred. At this second inquest, it was most irrefragably proved, that it was the identical body of Timothy Monroe, and not that of Morgan. Mrs. Monroe specified before seeing them certain articles of dress which she made with her own hands, and which were found exactly as she stated. In a great number of the particulars specified on oath before the first jury proved to be totally false, and the second ex-

audacious dispelled all doubt from the minds of every one except such as were determined not to be convinced.

*"A GOOD ENOUGH MORGAN 'TILL AFTER ELECTION."*

Even to this day we often see quoted in political newspapers the above sentence, the origin of which is ascribed to Thurlow Weed. At the disinterment of Monroe's remains, at the time of the inquest at Oak Orchard, after he and Whittlesey had viewed the body, they at once discovered that it was not that of Morgan, both of whom were well acquainted with him, and knew very well that he was bald on the top of the head, and never wore whiskers. This body had quite a tuft of hair where Morgan was bald, and also on one side of his face a bushy whisker, the other one, from the putrid state of the flesh was gone, evidently having been washed away by the water. Weed and Whittlesey saw that if the body was seen by those who had known Morgan, or by his wife, that it would be at once pronounced not that of Morgan's and they could not prove that a murder had been committed. It was reported that Weed privately mutilated the body by pulling out the hair and leaving the scalp and cheek bare as Morgan's was before his disappearance, when he remarked to Whittlesey: *"It is a good enough Morgan 'till after election."* In justice to Mr. Weed, who is still living, at a good old age, it should be stated that it is very doubtful if he was guilty of such a desecration of the dead. It was charged against him, however, by his political opponents, and especially reiterated by the Albany Argus, after he removed to Albany in 1880; he silently permitted it to remain uncontradicted until some ten years afterwards, when Henry O'Reilly, then editor of the Rochester Daily Advertiser, repeated it in the heat of a political excitement, and Weed immediately com-

menced a libel suit against the publishers of that paper, laying his damages, if I remember rightly, at \$20,000. The case was never brought to trial, and the defendants made some kind of a disclaimer which satisfied the wounded feelings of Weed.

#### INSANITY AND FANATICISM.

The affair of Morgan and the mystery surrounding his fate, was pregnant with wonder from the beginning. During the highest pitch of excitement there were not wanting people who, carried away by insanity equal to the days of Salem witchcraft, came forward and made confession as murderers. In one case a certain man by the name of Hill, living in Erie county, published a card over his own signature in the papers, confessing with the most imposing solemnity, that he himself was the murderer of Morgan, for which he supplicated the mercy of God and man. He attracted some notoriety, which was perhaps his motive, and was imprisoned, but could not gain a martyr's fame by being hung. The Grand Jury dismissed him as being a crazy fanatic or moon-struck in the upper story.

A man by the name of Sheldon, of very dissolute and intemperate habits, and confined for debt at the time Morgan was taken from jail in Canandaigua, in a public bar-room, while in a maudlin condition of intoxication, boasted of his being one of the abductors and murderers of Morgan. He repeated the same story when partially sober, and was very properly arrested and sent to jail, but absolutely refused to divulge who were his accomplices in the crimes he confessed. He was indicted and tried upon his own confession, but his friends clearly proved an alibi for him. It appeared that on the night of Morgan's abduction he was in a debauched condition, in bed and in a drunken stupor,

and was not off the debtor's limits in Canandaigua for months afterwards. Notwithstanding, however, the Anti-masonic jury, which had been organized to convict, brought in a verdict of guilty. Judge Throop, who was then Circuit Judge, and before whom he was tried, in passing sentence upon him, said, that, although there had not been a particle of evidence on the trial to prove him guilty of the crime charged in the indictment, nor did he himself believe him guilty, yet as he had boasted that he knew about the crime, and the only apology he had offered to the court and jury was the ungracious one of being a "*liar and drunkard*," therefore the court sentenced him to three months confinement in the county jail, not for abduction, but for lying and drunkenness.

Notwithstanding all the pretended expositions of the secrets of Free-masonry published by Miller, and the supplemental publications of Giddings and Bernard, the minds of the vulgar were not satisfied—they believed the institution much worse than represented. The phantasies of insanity knew no bounds, and the horrible stories of blood and murder no end. Many became the mere puppets of delusion and believed every horrible tale that was told. Amidst this state of insane ravings there appeared in the streets of Canandaigua, a crazy mountebank that for audacity and idly scarcely ever had a parallel in human lunacy. He had been an itinerant preacher of some sort of religious sect, but, I believe, never a licensed minister of any sect. I give some idea of his fertile imagination and crazy harangues, we subjoin, in substance, one of his harangues as it can now be remembered. He commenced by saying, "had years gone by, joined the Free-masons and proposed to give his gaping audience a substantial

account of all the doings of that institution, and then branched off by reciting sundry mysterious circumstances which befell him, as a member of the fraternity, that had not been developed by Morgan or other pretended imposters of the institution. He said that as soon as one was initiated he was "*inspired by the devil*," which in his case was as follows: As soon as he was let into the dark secrets of the Lodge an elder mason began to practice pranks of a very disagreeable quality upon his person, whereupon, being moved by an imp of hell, which the presiding master had engaged for his protection, he straightway, with one of the swords which are always ready for use in the Lodge, severed his right leg from his body, and standing upon his left, he gave the old mason who had exorcised him such a castigation with it that he was constrained to flee from his sight in affright. He then returned the leg to its place, and no lameness was the consequence. This devil stood by him a long time, but he having revealed to a friend some of the mysteries of masonry, the imp gave him over to the Lodge to be dealt with according to masonic law. He was "abducted" and strangled to death. But the devil again proved his friend and restored him to animation, and took him to Europe, where his adventures were of a similar character as those of Baron Munchausen. Suffice it to say he at last had his eyes opened like St. Paul, and he determined to get rid of the devil and Free-masonry, which by constant prayers and performing numerous penances he was enabled to do. He was then performing his mission of destroying the power of the devil on earth and when that was done the hydra-headed monster of masonry would fall with it. His ravings proved quite a performance to a fun loving crowd; and the roars of laughter which frequently inter-





serve to be censured for not turning the sinful out from among ye—why don't thee get rid of the wicked, if ye are not all wicked?"

MASON—"Why, my friend, if your story is to be believed we did most effectually rid ourselves of one of them, but you anties kicked up such a d—l of a row about it, that we thought it best to let the others remain as they were!"

A laughable story of Morgan's abduction and murder was told and perhaps believed in some rural districts where many horrors were told and distorted accounts had gained credence. It was this: Morgan sat in his back room at Batavia late at night writing out his disclosures. Being weary he had lain aside his pen and was regaling himself with a pot of spruce beer and a dutch pipe, when he discovered a pair of boots descending the chimney—presently a pair of legs made their appearance. Morgan was frightened—Santa Claus did not enter houses only in December, and this was September. In a few minutes one Jubelo Smith, well known to Morgan as a mason, stood before him covered with soot, as the chimney had not been cleaned for years. At first Morgan took him for a more important personage, and thought his time had come. But Smith brushed himself a little, and Morgan discovered "it was only an agent of his sulphurous majesty." Smith immediately "hoodwinked" Morgan and fastened a "cable tow" about his waist. Two other agents of the devil, named Jubela Johnson and Jubulum Thompson, were on the roof, who instantly pulled him up the chimney feet foremost. Smith followed—how he got up, no matter, but it was all done in a few moments. A balloon with a small steam engine, fed by brimstone, was ready into which Morgan was forced—

Lodges, as well as their unselfish devotion to the propagation of the religion to which they had consecrated their lives and energies. The same may be said of many Baptist clergymen but they were not so numerous as those of the Methodist. In the Episcopal church, always conservative, but little agitation was allowed to disturb its harmony. Among the Presbyterian and Congregational clergy, it was rare that a mason could be found, and the excitement had scarcely commenced against masonry before they began to denounce the institution in the most bitter and extravagant terms from the pulpit, and joined with the political Anti-masons in a determination to exterminate the Order. Among the members of these churches there were some who belonged to the Lodges and in many instances the main stay and support of their respective societies. But as the Anti-masonic influence increased, numbers of these yielded to the clamor and renounced masonry for the sake of peace, and the apple of discord seemed never to cease. Nearly all the members in the Baptist churches yielded to the first demand and became the most violent, and those who remained were cited before an ecclesiastical court, and were expelled as unworthy members of Christ's church, and denied the right of communion. Other churches followed and the religious denominations I have mentioned were soon purged of all taint of Free-masonry in Western New York.

It is a little amusing to read the records of some of the church trials which took place. When a brother was known to belong to the institution, he was immediately cited before the Presbytery or other judicial power of the society, to state why he should not be dealt with according to the demands of what he was accused

he was asked if he was a Free-mason. If he replied in the affirmative, charges were preferred against him and he put upon his trial. The witnesses against him were usually seceding masons who were asked their opinions of the evil influence of the Order, and among this class, willing witnesses were generally found to testify all that the prosecutors desired. Sometimes an honest, conscientious man would not testify as it was expected. As a specimen of these church trials I subjoin the testimony of two seceding masons, brought before a Baptist church in Danville, against some contumacious member who refused to dissolve his connection with the Order. The first are the questions propounded and the answers of Rev. Henry Jones, who was pastor of a Baptist Society and had renounced masonry on the demand of his congregation, that peace might remain in his church:

"Did you while a member of the Lodge consider the oaths you had taken, consistent with your duties as a christian minister?"

Ans.—"I certainly did."

"Did you not consider yourself bound to execute the penalty of death upon a member who should disclose the secrets of masonry?"

Ans.—"I am not willing to own that I was ever at heart a murderer." [On the question being repeated and a definite answer requested, the answer was—"I did not."]

"Did you suppose from anything you saw or heard that your brethren with whom you associated, felt that they ought to take the life of any one that should disclose?"

Ans.—"No never."

"Did you or your brethren consider yourselves bound to vote for a brother to any office in preference to another of equal qualifications?"

Ans.—"I did not."

"Did you consider yourself bound, or did the members

of the Lodge consider themselves bound to screen from justice a brother who had committed a crime which exposed him to punishment by the civil law?"

Ans.—"I never did."

"Did you ever hear any religious tenets or political principles discussed in the Lodge?"

Ans.—"No. On the contrary it was strictly enjoined that no such discussion could be allowed."

At the same church trial another seceding mason, by the name of Chisholm, who was a candidate on the Anti-masonic ticket for office, was interrogated in like manner, and gave answers directly opposite to the Rev. brother, as follows:

"Did you consider yourself while a member of the Lodge bound by your oath to execute death upon a member who should disclose the secrets of masonry?"

Ans.—"I did."

"Did you consider all the members bound by the same oath to take the life of him who should disclose?"

Ans.—"I did."

"Did you consider yourself bound to vote for a brother to any office in preference to another of equal qualification?"

Ans.—"I certainly did."

"Did you consider yourself bound to screen from justice a brother who had committed a crime which exposed him to punishment by the civil law?"

Ans.—"I did."

"Did you ever hear any religious tenets or political principles discussed in the Lodge?"

Ans.—"Very often."

Such was the conflicting testimony by which it was attempted by synods and ecclesiastic courts to draw out the proceedings of the Lodges, and generally with about the same result as given by the above two witnesses. Those who could say the most about the institution were believed by those who wished to favor the political party then becoming so potent.

In some cases this proscriptive course was the means of entirely breaking up large and influential churches. I might mention one where it ended in the disruption of a very flourishing Baptist society, which worshipped in a handsome church edifice and was one of the most prosperous religious communities in Ontario county. In this congregation there were many wealthy and respectable members who were not only devoted to the Baptist mode of worship but were also prominent and zealous Free-masons. No sooner had the fanaticism against masonry appeared, than the pastor, who was an eloquent preacher, but an intolerant bigot, began to thunder his anathemas against the Order, and proclaimed that every person who did not immediately renounce his connection with such a "hell-begotten" society was destined to everlasting damnation, and no after repentance could atone for his wickedness. About one-half of the members sustained the pastor in his war upon the institution, and a lively time and many disgraceful scenes took place at several church meetings. The anties, however, aided by political considerations and outside influence gained the day, and the masons were all expelled. Those who were left in the church were either unable or unwilling to bear the whole expense of keeping up the pastor's salary, and insisted on a reduction of his pay, which he declined to submit to, and another disgraceful quarrel was gotten up, which ended by another division that completely broke up the society. The church edifice was sold to the Universalists and is still owned and occupied by that denomination.

But it need not be inferred that the Universalists were exempt from the infection which distracted the other denominations. Nearly all the Universalist preachers were

masons, some of them zealous ones, and but few, it any of them ever renounced their allegiance to the Order. There were many of their parishioners who could not withstand the contagion and it became as injurious in that as other societies. The determined opposition of such broke up the relation between clergymen and people. A notable case was that of the venerable Father Stacy, eloquent and unblemished Universalist preacher, who long been the pastor of a large society at Hamilton, Madison county. A few of his most influential members came the most bitter partisans against masonry, and refused to commune with their pastor because he was a mason. These members at a church meeting, demanded that he should renounce the Order, or give up his position as pastor, as they said they "could not and would not hear the gospel preached by a man who belonged to a society which they believed had its origin in heathenish darkness: \* \* \*

\* \* \* and which has been supported by blood and money from its commencement up to the present time. Father Stacy replied at some length in an eloquent defence of the institution, in which he said: "Do not ask me to renounce masonry, for I will not do it. And I now say to you for all, you have no business with it—it is a matter exclusively between my own conscience and my God; and I am not accountable to you on the subject. I will enter into no compact with you about it, nor agree not to sit in a Lodge. I will do so if I please, and as often as I please, without asking your liberty. I will have my liberty in this respect, and while I accord to you equal liberty, I beg of you not to bring me into the church." But

1 Mr. Stacy voluntarily  
t society and removed to

West. A few years after, when the excitement had lost its power, his persecutors begged him to return, acknowledging their error and their folly.

Similar occurrences took place in a good many places where flourishing churches were destroyed which took many long years for them to recover their lost ground.

#### POLITICAL PROSCRIPTION OF MASONS.

As soon as the Anti-masonic party had gained the ascendancy in Western New York, and elected the town and county officers, a general proscription of all who belonged to the masonic Order, who would not renounce their adhesion to it, were stricken from the jury list and were allowed no rights which Anti-masons "were bound to respect." The Anti-masonic partisans affected so firmly to believe that Morgan was murdered, that any man who dared to express any doubt on the subject, was looked upon as dishonest. A Mason's integrity, no matter how well it may have been established, was now questioned. It was enough, as some of the leaders asserted, that they knew the whole fraternity were accessory to that murder, and there were fanatics enough to believe them, "when there was presented to them a *blank* deposition stating that some renegade said so, the question was in their view settled, although the man who may have pretended to say so, was admitted to be an infamous scoundrel, who would not be credited in a court of justice."

Hundreds of masons now renounced their further adhesion to the institution and were immediately received into the open ranks of the Anti-masonic party, and many of them rewarded with offices. Those who still maintained their faith in the institution ceased to make any further efforts to justify the institution. They still claimed that



they would not believe that Morgan was murdered by the masons until evidence of the fact was produced. That an outrage was committed upon his person in his abduction, an outrage no less against the principles of masonry than against the laws of the land, they were free to admit, as well as to censure, and hoped and trusted that those who were engaged in it would be made to suffer the punishment due their crimes. But they said they never would consent to see the innocent suffer for the misdeeds of the guilty.

#### SUSPENSION OF MASONIC LODGES.

In this state of affairs and the high excitement in the public mind, it was deemed best by the leading masons of Western New York and elsewhere, to suspend all work or meetings in masonic bodies where the excitement prevailed. These suggestions were very generally complied with, and a majority of the Lodges and Chapters surrendered their charters, jewels, furniture and regalia to the grand bodies from which their charters had been granted. There were some, however, who did not deem it necessary to do so, under the prophetic belief that the persecution of their Order would be only temporary and in a few years masonry would again become the respectable and leading benevolent society it had been. They however suspended all work, and if they held meetings, they were as secret from the public eye as their own inner ceremonies. A Lodge and Chapter in Canandaigua both refused to surrender their charters, but locked up their hall in which their meetings had been held, and an incendiary fire burned the building and all its contents in a short time afterwards. In Rochester, the Lodge, Chapter and Commandery also declined for a long time to surrender their organizations, secretly met and held their meetings, but were finally compelled to yield

to the clamor of the mob. In 1829 they returned their charters, and masonry ceased in that city also for some years. In Batavia, Lockport, Leroy, and nearly all the prominent villages, the Order yielded upon the first demand.

The organization of Odd Fellowship, which at this time was attracting some attention, also met with a like opposition and condemnation from the fanatical zeal of the hour. It was declared that Odd Fellowship was but another form of masonry, equally pernicious, equally abhorrent and abominable, and must be exterminated and driven from the land. This retarded the growth of that institution for a number of years, but on its revival it did not meet with that inveterate opposition which had been exercised against Free-masonry.

#### A CHAPTER ON POLITICS.

Early in the year 1827, as before referred to, certain politicians went vigorously to work and organized a powerful political party ostensibly founded on the opposition to the institution of Free-masonry, but including opposition to all other secret societies. It had its birth at the convention at Lewiston in March, 1827, and soon grew to a formidable power. The other political parties in New York were the old Republican or Democratic party, and the old Federal party which had supported and elected DeWitt Clinton Governor for a number of terms. Western New York had always been much attached to the federal party, the inhabitants being almost wholly New Englanders and their descendants. But, although Clinton never claimed to be a Federalist, yet he had been supported by that party against Madison in 1812, for President, and owing to his popularity as projector of the Erie Canal, they could always succeed

in electing him Governor of the State against any regular candidate of the Republican party, which they could not do by running an out and out Federalist, as the Eastern counties were strongly Republican. This party that supported Clinton, had been yecept "Cling-tails," by their opponents, who retorted by calling the regular Republicans "Buck-tails," but the Clintonians about this time had adopted the name of "National Republicans." The organizers and leaders of the Anti-masonic party were mainly old Federalists and had supported Clinton. Clinton was a mason of a high degree, and was at the time Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Chapter of the State, which, of course, threw him out of the pale of the new synagogue. The candidates before the people for President were John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, the former supported by the National Republicans or Federalists, and the latter by the Democrats or old line Republicans. In the first election after the organization (in November, 1827,) Genesee and a few other counties were carried on pure Anti-masonic tickets, and a number of Anti-masons were elected to the State Assembly. On the 11th of February, 1828, Governor Clinton suddenly died at the Executive Mansion in Albany, by a stroke of paralysis. It is said that he had previous to his death declared in favor of Jackson against Adams, and if he had lived would have been again elected Governor on the Democratic ticket, and then have received an appointment in Gen. Jackson's Cabinet. His death therefore was supposed to have had a better influence in augmenting the Anti masonic ranks than if he had lived.

In 1828, the Anti-masons nominated Francis Granger for Governor, but he declined and accepted the nomination for Lieut. Governor on the National ticket. He did all he

could to induce the anties to drop their State ticket, but a portion persisted and voted for Solomon Southwick. In most of the Western Counties the Anties and Nationals had large majorities but were beaten in the State by Martin Van Buren for Governor and Enos T. Throop for Lieut. Governor, the Jackson candidates.

In 1829 and 1830 the Anti-masonic party had reached its acme of power and was only beaten in the State by the friends of Henry Clay, many of whom voted for Throop, the administration candidate for Governor.

In 1829 the political Anti-masonic party having captured all Western New York now sighed like Alexander the Great for more worlds to conquer. So they went into the missionary business. Thurlow Weed was sent to Vermont where he found a congenial soil, and by a *coup d'etat* like St. Patrick with the clover leaf, he was eminently successful. Vermont was the only State carried by the Anti-masonic party, and as long as the party had a distinctive character it was reliable, not an officer could be elected in the State, for a number of years, who was not an out and out member of that party. Whittlesey made a raid on Pennsylvania, and with the aid of the late Thaddeus Stevens and other ambitious politicians, made some commotion in the politics of the Old Keystone State. A State Convention was held at Harrisburg, and Joseph Ritner, a staid old Dutchman of Washington county, nominated for Governor, who received quite a respectable vote at the ensuing fall election. Stevens succeeded in fanning the flame to keep the party alive for several years, long after the party was dead and buried in New York, and in 1835, by a division in the Democratic party—running two candidates—succeeded in electing the old Dutchman, Governor.

Ritner was an original in his way, and many anecdotes are told of him, one of which, if not true, is, at least, worth repeating. He is represented as a man of some mind, but rather illiterate and without much education. It was reported that he consulted Stevens upon every occasion when any question came before him for action by virtue of his office. The State had undertaken the building of several railroads, and having finished a portion of the main Central route, was operating it with horse cars, and a bill passed the Legislature to purchase ten locomotives to put on the line, but when it was presented to the Governor, Stevens happened to be absent from Harrisburgh, and the Governor had to decide for himself. He was not much in favor of modern innovations, and was therefore opposed to steam power succeeding the ancient mode of propelling machinery by horses and cattle; he therefore unadvisedly vetoed the bill. Everybody was astonished, as railroads had become very popular, and this purchase of locomotives was considered a necessity, the contract having already been made by the Board of Public Works, of which Mr. Stevens was a member. The latter therefore hurried back to Harrisburgh, and took the Governor to task, and told him he had ruined his political standing and the party. The old Governor saw his mistake, but unwilling to own it, devised a plan to remedy it. He therefore said to Mr. Stevens: "I tells you what you do, Mr. Stevens; the bill which I vetoes, called for ten *smoke* wagons; you go get another bill passed and make him *eleven*, den I signs him!" Stevens did as suggested and the bill became a law. It was found the line needed just eleven locomotives to properly equip it.

Jonathan Childs went to Massachusetts and was very successful in making Anti-masons, but very little success

in the way of turning manufacturers and money-grabbers from their devotion to Henry Clay, who was a Mason, and then the prospective candidate for President against Jackson. Clay was the father of the protective tariff system, and the Yankees were never known to let politics or religion interfere with their proverbial acquisitiveness for making money.

John Quincy Adams, having retired from the Presidency on the 4th of March, 1829, returned to his ancestral domain, at Quincy, in that State, and was still in the vigor of life and all potent in the politics of Massachusetts. It has been already observed that during the canvass of 1828 he had written a letter to the Anti-masonic committee in New York, which made him a pretty good friend of the cause. He was very bitter on the masonic institution and ready to go all length to exterminate the Order, but he was under too many obligations to his late Secretary of State to desert him, in the prospective contest to defeat his old political enemy—Gen. Jackson. Thus while he denounced masonry and masons, he placed himself in the inconsistent position of supporting Mr. Clay, a mason, and who had been Grand Master of Kentucky, for the highest office in the government. Political Anti-masonry therefore fell still-born in Massachusetts. Yet there were in 1829 four newspapers in the city of Boston alone, almost exclusively advocating the cause.

In Rhode Island and other New England States, except Vermont, the same causes, and the popularity of Mr. Adams, prevented the party from making any sensible inroads into the two old established political organizations.

The party spread also into one corner of Ohio. On "the Reserve," in the Northeastern part of the State, and the

counties bordering on Pennsylvania, the party carried all before it, but in the Southern and Western part of the State, it never got a foot hold, and after the election in 1832, it declined as rapidly as in New York and elsewhere.

In September, 1830, an Anti-masonic National Convention was held at Philadelphia, over which Francis Granger presided and Wm. H. Seward, of New York, and Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, were two of the leading spirits. Weed does not seem to have been present, as his name does not appear in the printed proceedings. It was Seward's first starting point in political life. He was elected a member of the New York Senate at the election in November following. The Convention was composed of about 100 delegates from Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and one delegate from the then territory of Michigan. The Convention discussed many points in regard to what the members designated the "iniquities of Free-masonry," rehashed all the stale anathemas that had been hurled against the institution in Western New York, and with appropriate resolves adjourned to meet again in September, 1831, at Baltimore to nominate candidates for President and Vice President. But Anti-masonry began about this time to wane, and the excitement seemed to have expended itself. However at the appointed time a National Convention was held at Baltimore, and Wm. Wirt, of Maryland, was nominated for President, and Amos Ellmaker, of Pennsylvania, for Vice President for the coming election in 1832. At this election this ticket only received seven electoral votes—the State of Vermont.

**Mr. Wirt** was one of the ablest statesmen and most learned jurists ever produced in this country. He was At-

torney-General during the administration of James Monroe, also a part of the succeeding administration of John Quincy Adams, and was acknowledged one of the most profound counselors in legal matters in the country. But Anti-masonry ended his career politically. Gen. Jackson while President, in speaking of the Anti-masonic excitement, remarked that it had been a great benefit to the nation as it had killed off two of the worst and most dangerous demagogues in the country—Wm. Wirt and Francis Granger. He was right as to the first, but the latter came to the front again for a short time in 1841, by General Harrison appointing him Postmaster General, but he only held the position a short time, as after the death of Harrison, President Tyler re-organized his cabinet and Granger retired, and never afterwards was heard of in public affairs.

In New York, in 1832, the Clay men and Anti-masons united on a single electoral ticket, although ostensibly supporting different candidates for President. The coalition was brought about by Weed and Seward. They went to Washington and attended a famous caucus of all the opponents of Gen. Jackson and there "sold out" the Anti-masonic party of New York to the friends of Henry Clay. It was reported that Weed received \$5,000 for the support of his paper, and, if possible, to throw the electoral vote of the great State of New York for the Kentucky statesman. The violent Anti masonic partisans did not readily agree to this arrangement, and denounced Weed in unmeasured terms. But Weed's tact was equal to the emergency, and after several consultations among the leaders, it was agreed that the Anti-masonic candidate for Governor, Francis Granger, should receive the support of all the Clay men, and the Anti-masons should support the Clay electoral ticket,



which if elected should cast its votes for either candidate for President, that would by so doing defeat Jackson. The same arrangement was made in Pennsylvania, but in Vermont, nothing but a simon-pure Wirt ticket was available. In Ohio and other States the Anti-Masons generally supported the Clay electoral ticket as against Gen. Jackson. Weed's arrangements failed as Jackson carried both New York and Pennsylvania by large majorities.

This virtually ended the Anti-mason party in New York, and the members naturally gravitated to the Whig party which was formed soon after.

At the election in New York, in 1832, the Democratic or Jackson candidate for Governor was the late Wm. L. Marcy, who subsequently occupied a seat in the cabinets of two National administrations—those of Mr. Polk and Gen. Pierce. During the excitement about Morgan, Marcy was one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, and an act having passed the Legislature organizing a special circuit to try some of the Morgan conspirators, Judge Marcy was appointed to hold one of these courts at Lockport, in June, 1830. The trials were long and tedious, but Judge Marcy presided with patience and conducted them with dignity and satisfaction to all parties. He was also at the time of his nomination a Senator for the State of New York in the National Congress, and very popular throughout the State. This popularity, it was feared, by the Anti-masonic leaders would surely elect him, unless they could get up some official act of his or something derogatory to his character that would turn the tide of popularity against him. After searching through his official record nothing could be found at fault, and his private life was so exemplary that nothing in that direction could be thought of. But Thurlow Weed

made a discovery. By the law organizing the special circuits, before mentioned, the judge was to have an extra allowance for his necessary traveling and other expenses, while holding these courts, to be audited and allowed by the Comptroller, and paid out of the State Treasury. Weed in examining Judge Marcy's bill of Expenses for holding the special circuit at Lockport, which was filed in the Comptroller's office as a voucher, discovered this item:

"To paid for mending my pantaloons,.....50"

Thus it was discovered that Judge Marcy had actually drawn from the people's treasury the sum of half of a dollar for repairing his own old worn out clothing! Weed's paper therefore was lively next issue. It proclaimed the fact in great double pica sensation head-lines, such as no paper at that time had ever indulged in, and made the welkin ring with the enormous robbery the great State of New York had endured by this man who now asked the suffrages of the people as their chief magistrate! The Anti-masonic papers throughout the State caught up the refrain and nothing for a time was heard but "Marcy's breeches!" Cuts representing a pair of pantaloons with a large patch, sometimes on the knee, and at others on the seat, with the figures "50 cts," were kept standing at the head of their columns, and long editorials with any amount of twaddle about the robbery Marcy had been guilty of. Handbills were also posted up from Lake Erie to the most eastern point of Long Island, with a much larger engraving of the garment, sometimes the "patch" represented in red ink to draw particular attention to the money unlawfully drawn from the treasury. But the affair had its sequel. It appears that Judge Marcy was very methodical in all his habits, and never paid out the smallest sum of money with

out making a record of it in his note book. It was said that his memorandums showed frequent items of one cent when he had paid that sum for some trifling article or given a boy for some small service. While at Lockport, his private memorandum was kept in the same note book with his official expenses to be paid by the State, but on different pages, and when he paid the tailor for sewing a few buttons on his pantaloons and making other repairs, he accidentally noted it down on the page on which he kept his public expenses. On his return to Albany, he called at the Comptroller's office to get his account audited, and handed to a clerk his note book to copy his bill in a proper form, as was the custom in the office. Thus it was that the private charge of "50 cts." for mending his own pantaloons was paid for by the State, he overlooking it, as well as the auditing officer, who probably did not particularly examine each item as he might in other cases where he was not so well acquainted with the accuracy of the claimant. When this became understood the administration papers were not slow in putting the matter in the most favorable light before the people, and the re-action resulted greatly in his favor. His careful and methodical course of transacting all business, both public and private, became known to the people, and it made him thousands of votes that otherwise he would not have received, and he was elected by a large majority. Weed nor any of the Anti masonic papers ever mentioned the "50 cts." steal after the election, notwithstanding he was three times afterwards a candidate and opposed by them for the same office, but his friends were very fond of him to at every canvass. At each successive election he was universally declared for "Marcy's" man, up to 1838, when the "Breeches"

began to lose its talismanic power, and Marcy was defeated by Wm. H. Seward. "Marcy's Bræches" then passed into history.

The aggregate Anti-masonic vote at the fall election, in 1827, was about 14,000. This was before the party was fully organized and was local, in the western counties, only a few having nominated tickets. In 1828, Granger, who was nominated by an Anti-masonic State Convention, declined to be a candidate on the ticket but accepted the National Republican nomination for Lieutenant Governor. Weed and most of the leaders approved of this course, and advised the members of the party to support the National ticket thus formed and thereby defeat the Jackson candidate—Van Buren. But the rank and file would not consent, and Solomon Southwick having announced himself a simon pure Anti-masonic candidate for Governor, received 33,000 votes. Van Buren had but a plurality of 23,000 votes over the National candidate, and had the Anti-masons all voted for the latter he and Granger would have been elected. The Anti-masons all supported John Quincy Adams for President, as well as the Nationals, but at that time the Presidential Electoral College was elected by districts, instead of by general ticket, as in 1832, and for all time subsequently, and Jackson's Electors were chosen in twenty districts, and Adams carried but sixteen. Adams, previous to the election having been interrogated by the Anti-masonic committee as to his views of masonry replied that "he was not and never had been a mason," which secured him the support of every member of that party, but lost him perhaps some votes among the masons, who were Federalists, and who thought a President of the United States descended from his proper dignity to answer so in-

significant and unimportant a question. Jackson was a mason and had been the Grand Master of Tennessee. In 1829, the Anti-masons carried all the counties west of Cayuga Lake, except Steuben, by large majorities, and also Washington and Rensselaer and some other counties in the eastern section of the State, whose people were mostly New Englanders, and always heretofore had given majorities for the Federal party. The aggregate vote of the party this year was over 75,000. In 1830, a governor's election was to take place and the party put forth its whole strength to carry the State. A State convention nominated Francis Granger, and the National Republicans abstained from running any ticket, and it was supposed that Granger would receive the combined vote of both parties, with the probabilities of a certain election. The Jackson or Democratic party nominated Gov. Throop, who had been the acting Governor for the past two years, for Governor, and the contest was a spirited one. A portion of the Nationals, however, refused to support Granger, and he was defeated. The Anti-masonic vote this year was 123,000, the heaviest they ever polled in the State.

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This history would be incomplete without some reference to the judicial proceedings which transpired, growing out of the Morgan Abduction and supposed murder—the efforts made by the Anti-masonic Committee to judicially prove that he was executed by the requirements of masonic obligations, etc., but it will be readily seen that only a mere sketch of some of the leading cases can be given. Otherwise it would be equal to making up a volume of law cases or reports of a very uninteresting character.

Mr. Seward in a speech before the Philadelphia Anti-

masonic National Convention in September, 1830, said that "the abduction and murder of Morgan had been participated in by at least one hundred masons." But Weed only claimed that fifty-two were directly or indirectly concerned, and at the time the "crime" was committed, knew anything about it. In his Journal in 1830, he gave the names of these and candidly admitted that there was no legal evidence against some of them. There were perhaps over one hundred indictments presented, but upon most of them no trials were had, others were found "not guilty," and six only convicted, who were sentenced to short terms of imprisonment in the county jails.

The Anti-masonic committee, before mentioned, was the instigator of the proceedings, who deemed it necessary to keep these trials before the public that the excitement might not lose its interest. They entirely failed to prove that any murder had been committed, and consequently no one was indicted except for conspiracy or participating in the abduction. The nearest they ever came to proving a murder was by one

EDWARD GIDDINGS.

At the time Morgan was taken to Niagara, the fort was in charge of Giddings, who had been a sergeant in the U. S. Army, and now in the employ of the government as light house keeper at the mouth of the river. He was a mason, and at the first meeting of the Leroy Seceders appeared there as a repentant criminal and confessed, that he received Morgan in the fort and locked him up in the magazine—that after a few days a committee of masons, with himself, delivered over the prisoner to the Canada masons and he was taken over the river and there murdered. Thus, even if any credit could be given to this confessed ruffian's

statement, the crime was committed without the jurisdiction of New York and of the United States. The many persons now living, who have seen "Giddings' nunc," which contained his horrible confession, illustrated with frightful wood cuts of scenes in the Morgan "trial" and other masonic "deviltry." If we take his testimony as a self-convicted murderer. He said he knew not where Morgan had any water or food during his confinement days, and candidly admitted that the men in connection with him, who had the custody of Morgan, were in favor of his release, and he would have been released if (Giddings) had consented to it. When he first made his confession and issued his almanac, the Anti-masons accepted him as a valuable acquisition to their party, but the more sagacious ones soon discovered he had overreached the matter and that he would prove a "whited sepulchre" to their political aspirations. He was not the witness they wanted to prove the murder of Morgan. Upon going to court as a witness, counsel objected to his testimony, and the court sustained the objection. An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of the State, where the decision of the Court below was affirmed. His rejection as a witness by the Court was not on the ground of his being an accomplice in the crime, but under the common law rule, as well as the Statutes of New York at that period, which excluded from Court who had avowed Atheistical doctrine, disbelief in divine revelation. It was proved in Court that Giddings was a notorious sceptic, and it was upon this point that the Court excluded him from the witness stand. The rule has since been modified in New York, as well as most if not all the States by the abrogation of the common law,

witness is not now excluded for his belief or unbelief in a divine providence or his denial of revelation from God to man. But at that time it was in full force, and even Antimasons admitted that Giddings was properly excluded from testifying. In fact, no candid man believed a word of his story, and he soon sank out of public sight.

JOHN C. SPENCER.

This distinguished counselor, at the time the first indictments were presented, was a Senator in the New York Legislature from the Ontario district, and attending to his official duties at Albany. Cheesebro, Sawyer, and Lawson immediately sent for him and engaged him as their counsel and attorney in the forthcoming trial. He came home and accepted the trust, and they told him all they knew about the matter under the seal of the well-known rule of attorney and client. Exactly what they confessed, of course, the public never knew, but these men afterwards claimed that he most shamefully violated the trust reposed in him as counsel, which should have consigned him to dishonorable infamy in the profession. After he had obtained their confession he advised them to plead guilty to the indictment, which they did.

As soon as his clients were sentenced, Spencer returned to Albany, where he procured the passage of an act of the Legislature authorizing the appointment of a special attorney to prosecute the abductors and "murderers" of Morgan, representing to the Governor that he had obtained a full knowledge of all concerned in the Morgan affair, and asked the position for himself. Gov. Van Buren hesitated in appointing him, but after offering it to several others who declined to accept, Spencer succeeded in getting himself appointed, whereupon he immediately commenced



a rigid and vindictive prosecution of all who were in any manner suspected of any participation in the affair. Before he left Albany, he exhibited to the Governor the following alphabetical list of names whom he proposed to prosecute, and among whom he claimed were the murderers:

"Adams, Allen, Bruce, Brown, Butler, Barton, Coe, Chipperfield, Cheesebro, Cummins, Parrow, Dean, Daniels, Folletts, Fox, French, Farwell, Gansen, Gillis, Goodwill, Haskins, Haywood, Howard, Hubbard, Hurlbut, S. Jewett, E. Jewett, Johns, King, Kingsley, Ketchum, Lawson, Lakey, Mathers, McDonald, McBride, Molineux, Platt, Parkhurst, Roberts, Sawyer, Smith, Shepherd, Seymour, Seaver, Sheldon, Turner, Tompson, Whitney, Wright, Wilson, Walbridge, and Wilcox."

Some of these men were not masons, and others were as equally astonished when they learned that Spencer was about to institute proceedings against them for murder and kidnapping. Three of them had already been tried and were serving out their terms of imprisonment. They were not only astonished but their indignation knew no bounds at the infamy of the man who had so basely betrayed them. Many libel suits grew out of the publication of the list which were terminated by either an apology, or by an Anti-masonic jury failing to convict, or awarding damages.

Spencer, however, procured indictments against the major part of these men and others whom he afterwards suspected and marked out as proper victims for the prison house or the gallows; and a high carnival of Anti-masonic trials was soon in progress. The terrible persecutions and bitter animosity against masonry incited and aided him in his arbitrary and vindictive zeal to try some of the most respectable and valuable citizens of Western New York, of whom he well knew were guilty of no crime, but

ments, and had mutilated the other as agreed, which the Court dismissed, but when the Special Attorney called upon Jewett to testify as proposed, the witness swore to a directly opposite state of facts, which upset the attorney's calculations and made him terrible wroth, but he dare not say a word in open court as he would then be exposing his own shame. But outside, meeting Jewett, he upbraided him roundly for violating the contract, and threatened to procure other indictments against him. Jewett told him, however, he had better go slow, for if he attempted to trouble him further, he would expose the whole transaction, and get him indicted for forgery and mutilating the court records. Spencer quailed and never mentioned Jewett again while he was Special Attorney.

Spencer's next attempt to prove a murder was to tamper with another prisoner, who was serving out a two years and four months sentence in the Canandaigua jail. This prisoner was Eli Bruce. This attempt also failing, he appears to have thereafter abandoned this mode of making the right kind of witnesses.

Spencer soon after this resigned his office, and Victory Birdsye was appointed in his place. Birdsye was far less vindictive, and in most respects fair and impartial, and the defendants tried afterwards had no cause to complain of any unfairness on the part of the Special Attorney.

The Anti-masons elected Spencer to the Lower House of the Legislature in 1830, but on the decline of that party, he declined with it, and pursued a very retired life up to 1842, when President Tyler appointed him Secretary of War on the disruption of the Harrison cabinet. It was while he was Secretary of War that the Somers tragedy took place, in which his son was hung at the yard-arm of a war vessel for

mutiny. Capt. McKenzie gave as his reasons for not putting the young man in irons and bringing him home for trial, that his father's influence as a cabinet officer he feared would prevent the proper punishment of the mutineer. Spencer resigned his position in the cabinet and retired to private life and died a few years after.

CHEESEBRO, SAWYER, LAWSON AND "DR. FOSTER."

At the first meeting of the grand jury after the Morgan hegira from Canandaigua, Cheesebro, Sawyer, Lawson, and "Dr. Foster" were formally indicted for "wickedly and maliciously kidnapping and forcibly taking William Morgan, against his will or consent, out of the limits of Ontario county, against the peace and dignity of the people of the State of New York." The first three were arrested and gave bail, but the last could not be found, and as before stated never was found.

Cheesebro, Sawyer and Lawson employed John C. Spencer for their counsel, and upon his advice, the three plead guilty on being arranged, and the Court sentenced them to one year's imprisonment each in the County jail. They served out their term of imprisonment without a murmur, and on being released assumed their former business, and lived and died highly respected in the community where they were known. Mr. Cheesebro, during the administration of President Pierce, was appointed Postmaster at Canandaigua, which office he held until 1860 or 1861, satisfactorily to the people and the government. He was the father of the late celebrated authoress, Miss Caroline A. Cheesebro.

The version of these men was that by the request of other parties they had assisted in getting Morgan from Batavia, and also in taking him to Niagara, on his way to

Canada, where they understood he desired to go and get away from Miller and his associates, and with the discrepancy in their statement with other witnesses as to the willingness of Morgan to enter the carriage near the jail, their truthfulness was never doubted by their friends and neighbors. As long as the excitement lasted they maintained a remarkable reticence about the affair, but years afterwards, when the excitement had ceased, they made no hesitation in giving the above explanation to all who sought it.

ELI BRUCE.

This individual at the time of the abduction of Morgan was Sheriff of Niagara county. He admitted that he met the carriage with Morgan at a point three miles north of Lockport, and accompanied it to Lewistown and from thence to Youngstown, and was present when Morgan was locked up in the old magazine, but he declared that he never supposed that Morgan was under any restraint, but that he went there of his own free will and was anxious to get out of the State in some mysterious manner. What took place afterwards he solemnly averred he knew not.

A few months after he was ordered to appear before Gov. Clinton, at Albany, and show cause why he should not be deposed from office for participating in the unlawful abduction of Morgan. Gov. Clinton, after hearing the case promptly removed him from office. He was soon after indicted, threatened and in every possible way harrassed and persecuted, and his trial purposely put off by Spencer, until financially ruined he had no means for the support of himself and family. In this condition he was brought to trial.

The indictment against him also included two correspondents—Orsamus Turner and Jared Darrow. Separ-

the trials were commenced. The defendants said the two had been married, but it does not appear that there was anything to substantiate their statement with the other persons of the persons (friends of Bruce), and it was very known that the Anti-Slavery Committee of the State had been very active there was in connection with the trial of the defendant. Bruce's trial commenced at the Court of Sessions—Judge Howell presiding—at the Court of the 2nd day of August 1831. The trial was held before the Jury brought in a verdict of guilty of the conspiracy and Abduction of William Mount. His counsel took exceptions to the verdict of the jury and the Court of Sessions on account of a *merger* of the two crimes which was not specifically set forth in the indictment. The case was therefore taken to the Supreme Court, and in the following May that Court decided that the facts of the case did not constitute a *merger*. The opinion of the Court was given by Judge Savage, who said: "The offence of conspiracy is a distinct and separate offence—and not at all necessary to, or necessarily connected with, the false imprisonment shown by the evidence. The defendant Bruce might commit the offence of abduction, or the imprisonment without having been guilty of conspiracy." The counsel claimed that the exceptions were not properly certified to the Supreme Court, otherwise a different decision would have been made, but they made no farther attempt to avoid the pronouncing of the sentence. On the 20th day of May the Court sentenced Bruce to be confined in the county jail, at Canandaigua, for the term of two years and four months. He remained in jail till September 20th, 1831.

While in jail, Spencer attempted to suborn him to

testify to a murder, offering to provide for his family, and to loan him money on "his own individual responsibility, and that he did not doubt that the executive would be induced from such a course, at the instance of the Anti-masonic party to relieve him before the expiration of his time." But Bruce indignantly rejected all offers to perjure himself that he might thereby be personally benefited. While serving out his term also he was taken to Lockport to testify on the trial of Ezekiel Jewett, but refused to be sworn, remarking "that he had once consented to testify, but as he believed it had been of no service he should decline." The Court ordered him to be imprisoned thirty days in the Ontario county jail after his present term had expired, for contempt. But this order was never carried out. He was released at the expiration of his sentence, as the Judge remitted this order on account of the feeble condition of his health caused by the long confinement. Broken down in constitution from his long imprisonment, on being released he returned to Lockport, where his family resided, and commenced the practice of medicine, but about one year thereafter, he was attacked with the Asiatic Cholera, on its first visit to this country in 1832. He died on the 24th day of September, 1832, aged 39 years.

On the trial of John Whitney and James L. Gillis, Bruce was called as a witness on the part of the defence when he testified as follows:

**"Eli Bruce**—On the evening of the 13th of September, witness was first informed of Morgan's being on the Ridge Road. Two gentlemen came and gave him this information, One of them was Burrage Smith—the name of the other he declines mentioning. It was not John Whitney. Did not, till that time, know that Morgan had been taken to Canandaigua. Six or eight days before this time,

a gentleman called on witness to go to Batavia and get Morgan away. He stated that there was difficulty between Morgan and Miller, and that Morgan would go away willingly. Witness declined having any thing to do with it. Orsamus Turner, of Lockport, called on witness about this time, and requested him to fit up an apartment in the jail for Morgan's temporary reception, and stated that Morgan would be there that night on his way to Canada. Witness saw Burrage Smith at the Cottage Inn in Lockport. There was no strangers with him. He did not know John Whitney at that time. The two gentlemen referred to requested witness to go to Wright's tavern on the Ridge. They stated that Morgan was there, on his way to Canada. Witness inquired if there was difficulty or trouble. Stated that he was Sheriff of the county, and did not wish to get into a scrape. They assured him that Morgan had consented to go away—that he was to be put upon a farm in Canada. Witness went to Wright's, where he found the carriage in which Morgan was conveyed. Witness says, a man who is dead, (Hague) and Morgan, were the only persons who rode in the carriage from Wright's to Lewiston. They changed horses at Lewiston, and proceeded to the burying-ground near Fort Niagara. They then crossed the ferry near the Fort, over to Canada. Morgan did not get out of the boat. The arrangements on the Canada side, for Morgan's reception, were not completed, and he was brought back. It was thought best to bring him back a few days until the people on the other side were ready to receive him. They then went up to the Fort and lodged Morgan in the magazine, to await the preparations on the other side of the river. Has never seen Morgan since he left him in the magazine. Does not know what was done with him. He left the Fort before day-light. Hague and Morgan conversed together. Morgan supposed he was going with friends, and appeared perfectly easy. Some liquor was handed in to Morgan at Molineux's tavern. He sat erect in the carriage, and did not appear to be enfeebled. When they got out of the carriage, Morgan locked arms with the two gentlemen, (Hague and the gentleman who got in at

Youngstown,) and walked towards the Fort. Witness supposed that Morgan had consented to go off. There was no liquor in the carriage.

*Cross examination by Mr. Spencer.*—The man who was with Smith is five hundred miles from this place. He then lived at Lockport. Witness got to Wright's tavern between 9 and 10 o'clock in the evening. He rode back to Lockport, the next day in a sulkey. He does not know how Smith got to Lockport. He does not know how the sulkey got to Lewiston. He understood that the sulkey was sent home. Did not see any body start with it. The sulkey was to be forwarded on east. The horse, he understood, was owned somewhere on the Ridge. Might have had directions where to send the horse and sulkey, but don't now recollect particulars. Witness saw several persons at Wright's—perhaps half a dozen, besides those who resided there. Some of them were strangers. Wright lives at the point where the Lockport road intersects the Ridge. It is about three miles from Lockport. Saw three persons whom he knew, at Wright's, besides those who went on with him. He knew the person who drove the carriage. A person on horseback rode up near them when near Molineux's. Took another carriage at Lewiston. The curtains of both carriages were closed down. Has seen Loton Lawson in jail since, but did not see him at Wright's. Is confident of that. The same persons only who came from Wright's, got into Fox's carriage. Fox's testimony is perfectly correct. A man got in near Youngstown. Witness met two or three strangers on the way from Wright's to Lockport, on foot. He met them about three quarters of a mile from Wright's. Witness saw a stranger at the installation the next day, whom he was informed was John Whitney, of Rochester. Morgan was left in the magazine. [To the question in whose charge, Morgan was left, the Court interposed and said that persons not upon trial, must not be implicated, and the question was not answered. The Court also refused to permit the names of persons who were in the boat, to be mentioned.] Witness said they crossed the river in the usual ferry boat. The subject of Morgan's abduction was not



agreed upon at a regular meeting of the Royal Arch Chapter, at Lockport, two weeks before it was done. They might have been a desultory discussion about it by the members of the Chapter—cannot tell the specific time—cannot say it was during the September session. Does not recollect that he told a person that arrangements had been made by himself and two other Sheriffs to carry Morgan off. Witness says, upon his oath, that he believed he had consented to go away voluntarily. Morgan made no complaint while witness was with him. There was no pistol either in the carriage or boat, to the knowledge of the witness. The regular stage to Lewiston did not then run through Lockport. It was six or eight days before Morgan was at Wright's that Turner came and asked witness there was a cell at liberty. He stated that Morgan would be brought that night from Batavia, and a place was wanted for him till he could be sent on to Canada."

ELIHU MATHER.

This gentleman was indicted at the Orleans county Circuit Court, charging him with a "Conspiracy to kidnap William Morgan," and his trial took place at the November term of the Court, 1830. Over a week was occupied in impanneling a jury, and the most exciting of all the trial occurred in relation to the right of masons to sit on the jury, when one of the fraternity was to be tried. The oath or obligations of masons were here pretty well ventilated. The masons were all excluded from the panel except on who was admitted by Judge Gardiner, the presiding Judge. He deposing on oath that he would have no more hesitancy in bringing in a member guilty, if proved, than one who had never belonged to the Order. The Anti-masonic committee were very indignant towards the Judge for this ruling, and took up the exceptions of the Special Counsel to the Supreme Court, where the decision was sustained. He satisfied with this they introduced the subject into the

General Assembly as worthy of a legislative inquiry, and the Assembly ordered the Judge to make a special report upon what grounds he had so decided. This report was an able and logical one, and so clearly justified his action, that even the most violent partisan never made a move to have the matter further investigated.

The testimony on the trial of Mather was that when the Morgan carriage arrived at Gaines, on the Ridge Road, he was applied to for a change of horses—that he procured the team of his brother's, put them to the vehicle in the place of those that needed rest, mounted the box and drove the carriage to the next place of change, when he returned home. This was all the part he had with the affair, and it was not proved that he knew who were his passengers, or that he had ever heard of William Morgan. Upon these facts only being shown the jury very properly acquitted him. He afterwards moved to Michigan, and resided at Coldwater in that State, where he died in 1866, at the age of 84 years.

COL. W. M. KING.

This gentleman at the time of the Morgan Abduction resided on a farm about six miles from Lewiston, near Youngstown. He was a man of unblemished character, and possessed a reputation for exemplary integrity. He had represented Niagara county in both Houses of the New York Legislature and was widely known, and highly esteemed. On the night that the Morgan carriage was driven to Youngstown, it stopped at Col. King's, and Bruce went in and woke him up, the hour being near midnight. Corydon Fox, the driver of the carriage from Lewiston, testified that King and Bruce conversed for some time together in the hall, when Col. King came and got into the

carriage. He then accompanied the party across the ferry to Canada and returned with it, and was present when Morgan was locked up by Giddings in the magazine. The next day he participated in the ceremonies at Lewiston, as well as Bruce, and it does not appear that he further troubled himself about Morgan, or ever inquired after his fate. His health for some time had been feeble, being attacked with pulmonary consumption, for which he was advised by his physicians to seek a more southern climate as a check to the disease. With this view he obtained an appointment as Sutler in the army for a station at "Cantonment Towson," on a tributary to the Red River, in Louisiana, near the boundary line of Texas, and left for this distant station a few months after the Morgan abduction. He was indicted for "conspiracy and murder," shortly after he left, and the Anti-masonic committee declared he was a fugitive from justice, and demanded that an officer be sent to arrest and bring him back. A requisition from the Governor of New York on the Governor of Louisiana was procured, and Joseph Garlinghouse, Sheriff of Ontario county, with Phineas P. Bates, ex-Sheriff, thus armed, started for Louisiana. Garlinghouse and Bates, at the commencement of the legal proceedings against the "Abductors," had a special contract between themselves to share the profits of the venture, and if they could convict any one of murder, they proposed to claim the \$2,000 reward offered by Gov. Clinton. They were therefore very zealous to procure Col. King, as there was a count in the indictment against him for murder, and it was thought he might have been one of those who took Morgan out of the magazine on the night of the 20th of September. When they arrived at New Orleans, an officer of the military post where Col. King was

stationed, was also in the city, and while they were getting the proper endorsement of their papers from the Governor, learned their errand, and hurried back to camp, arriving there before the Sheriff and his deputy. He informed the Colonel of what was in store for him. Col. King determined not to be arrested by these officers and dragged back as a criminal in chains, but to go back by himself a free citizen, and in New York boldly face his accusers. He therefore stepped over the line into Texas, and when the officers arrived at the camp they could not find their prisoner. There would have been little danger or inquiry made if they had pursued and arrested him on Mexican soil, as that Government paid but little attention to infractions of international law in that remote region from the seat of Government, but Garlinghouse and Bates were not the most courageous of men, and some hints of the Colonel's friends in camp, made them hurry on the road homeward. Col. King immediately resigned his position and made haste to return to New York to meet the accusation against him. He arrived at Lockport about the same time the officers did, and stood fearless and erect before his enemies and defied them to prove that he had committed any violation of the laws of his country. He was arrested, but was released on bail to appear for trial at a future term of the Court. But he was soon called to appear before a higher tribunal than that covenanted in the bond. He died in a few weeks after, his friends said from an attack of hemorrhage of the the lungs—his enemies, of remorse and shame.

EZEKIEL, JEWETT.

The indictment against this gentleman was for false imprisonment, charging him specifically with receiving Morgan at the fort and locking him up in the magazine.

When the troops left the fort in May, 1826, as has before been stated, the government property there was left in the custody of Giddings, who was the light house keeper, but sometime in August, a Commissary in the army visited the fort for the purpose of seeing what property was left, with a view to making some disposition, or preserving it from waste. While there he made sale of certain articles belonging to the government, but not disposing of all, he employed Mr. Jewett to take charge of the balance, and returned to his regiment. Thus it was that Mr. Jewett was *quasi* in possession of the fort in the September following, but on his trial it was proved that Giddings had the keys of the magazine, and that they were never in the possession of Jewett, and all the testimony brought forward by the prosecution, did not directly implicate the defendant in a remote way with the affair. His trial took place in Lockport, in June, 1830, before the Special Court—Judge Marcy presiding. It was a long and tedious trial, and it was at this term that the Judge charged the State half a dollar for getting a tailor to mend his pantaloons. The jury in the case of Jewett were out but fifteen minutes before they brought in a verdict of "Not guilty."

Solomon C. Wright and Jeremiah Brown, the first a tavern keeper, on the Ridge Road where the horses to the carriage was changed, and the latter who drove the from Wright's to Lewiston were tried at this same both also acquitted.

BURRAGE SMITH

in Rochester, in September, 1826, and in company with him took passage in the stage from Rochester to Canastota, on the morning of the 12th of that month. He was one who accompanied the Morgan carriage,

and is supposed to be the one who rode in the sulkey, which waited for the carriage at Ackley's, at the north end of the village. Others supposed him to be the mysterious "Dr. Foster," who in company with Cheesebro, Lawson and Sawyer, took Morgan from the jail, but this was proved by the testimony of Mrs. Hall and Dr. Wells not to be the case, as they deposed that the two bore no resemblance. Whichever way he may have left Canandaigua, it was well authenticated that he accompanied the party to Niagara. It will be seen by Bruce's testimony that he it was, who informed him (Bruce) at Lockport that Morgan was at Wright's, and that he had rode on ahead in the sulkey to notify him of the fact. He was the next day at the installation at Lewiston, and returned home the following day by the steamboat plying on Lake Ontario between Niagara and Rochester. After Cheesebro, Sawyer and Lawson were indicted, and the Anti-masonic committee publicly avowed their intention to prosecute every one connected with Morgan's abduction, Smith and Whitney suddenly left Rochester and the State. They went to Louisville, Kentucky, and procured employment on the Ohio canal then being constructed around the Falls at that place. The Anti-masons immediately proclaimed that Smith and Whitney were fugitive murderers and hastened to obtain the proper papers to arrest them in Kentucky. Smith was indicted in the Ontario Special Sessions for Conspiracy and False Imprisonment. Whitney was also indicted at the same term, but of him we will speak more fully hereafter. The proper requisitions were procured of the Governor, and Garlinghouse and Bates at once started for Kentucky. There were a large number of citizens of Ontario and Monroe counties at Louisville employed on the work of the

canal, Major Nathaniel Allen, of Ontario county, having a large contract thereon, and had engaged laborers in his own section of the country. Through some of these Smith and Whitney learned that Garlinghouse and Bates were on their way to arrest them, when they immediately left before the officers arrived at Louisville. Smith went to New Orleans, but the officers did not pursue him farther, they having no authority to arrest their prisoners any where but on Kentucky soil. When Garlinghouse went to Louisiana for Col. King, he also took with him papers for Smith, but did not find him. His wife soon afterwards joined him at Rodney, Mississippi, and he getting into business in New Orleans, determined to make it his permanent residence. But death soon put an end to his career on earth. In 1829, the yellow fever raged with great virulence in that city and he became one of its victims. He died on the 17th day of August of that year.

JOHN WHITNEY AND JAMES L. GILLIS.

We have grouped these two individuals under one sub-head for the reason that they were jointly presented in the indictment as co-criminals, for what reason it was never known except to the prosecutors and the grand jury who found the bill. We shall, however, in treating of their cases take up each separately, and unlike the Court before whom they were tried, grant them separate trials. It was said that the reason they were jointly presented, was, that the Anti-masonic committee found they had more evidence to convict Whitney than Gillis, and by indicting and trying them together they hoped to secure two victims instead of one. This may have been the proper solution, as it appeared they had some evidence against Whitney, while no evidence worthy of belief was ever produced against Gillis.

It has already been mentioned in speaking of the case of Burrage Smith that Mr. Whitney came to Canandaigua with that gentleman on the memorable 12th of September. His business there ostensibly was to employ a stone cutter for his business in Rochester, and his partner in his testimony on the trial stated they were in want of such a workman, and that Whitney told him that was his business to Canandaigua on the morning before leaving Rochester. But it was generally believed that Smith and Whitney went there that day pursuant to an arrangement to receive Morgan and take him to Niagara. While at Canandaigua, he made inquiries for a stone cutter, and several parties who knew him met him and testified that that appeared to be his only business. He was not at the jail when Morgan was taken out, but was overtaken by the carriage, traveling on foot, a mile or two out of the village. He got up and rode on the seat with the driver to Victor, when he procured a horse and went on ahead of the carriage to Rochester, where it is supposed he made the arrangements for the second carriage that took up the party at Hanford's. He went on with the carriage to Lewiston, or near there, and attended the Installation on the 14th, and returned to Rochester in the steamboat with Smith the following day. His own version of the affair is given in his testimony at the second trial of Mr. Gillis, which was as follows:

"John Whitney being duly sworn, stated in substance that he started from Rochester for Canandaigua on the 12th of September, 1824, in company with Burrage Smith, for the purpose of collecting a bill due him at Victor, and to get a stone cutter at Canandaigua, which was his only business and only object he had in view, and that he did not then know that Morgan was to be taken away. That he was imperfectly acquainted with the defendant at that time.



He got on the box of the carriage containing Morgan about a mile out of Canandaigua. James L. Gillis was not in the carriage to his knowledge. He did not know Morgan at that time. Rode in the carriage to Beach's tavern at Victor, where he left it when watering at the trough, and got a horse of Dr. Beach to go to Rochester. He did not see the carriage after he left it to go into Beach's until he saw it at the Reservoir at Rochester. When he waked them up at Beach's he went around to the kitchen door and from thence into the bar-room, where he saw two or three persons, among whom was one of the Gillises; he thinks Enos, with whom he drank; was there in all, twenty minutes or half an hour—did not see James L. Gillis there, nor on the road to Rochester, nor at Hanford's Landing, where he was present when they changed carriages, and he could not have been there without his knowing it; Gillis did not ride out with him, nor did he see him to his knowledge at any place or any where on the road; no man of that name accompanied him, nor did he see any one of that name on the road. He knew of no restraint upon Morgan. He did not hear him threatened—he was not gagged, nor blinded, nor to his knowledge was he intoxicated. He heard some fault found with Morgan about the course he had pursued. Morgan manifested regret, and he (witness) understood from the company and from Morgan, that Morgan was going west, secretly, for the purpose of preventing Miller and his associates from knowing where he did go—with the object in view to stop the publication of the book they were about to publish, and he (witness) verily believed this was the real object.

"Morgan complained of Miller and his associates—said they had led him astray, and he was sorry for it. He appeared perfectly satisfied in going off, and spoke of an arrangement to go. On the Ridge Road they stopped at two public houses, and at an orchard they got out, gathered and ate apples, Morgan among the others, each walking about at pleasure. There was no jug of liquor in the carriage, but there was some brought into it in a tumbler. Witness took supper at Wright's and went on with the car-

riage to within about ten miles of Lewiston. Witness does not know that Morgan was carried out of the State, nor what became of him. The carriage was not closed all the time. He had no conversation with the Gillis whom he saw at Beach's on the subject of Morgan. James L. Gillis did not ride in the carriage with Smith and himself from Victor to Canandaigua. Witness did not take tea at Ackley's, nor was he about the postoffice that day, or night, except coming in or going out from Canandaigua. The persons in the carriage were addressed by their correct names. He informed, or engaged to inform, those who were going to the installation at Lewiston that this carriage was on its way, and he expected himself to go with them. It was told to Morgan that he should be as well taken care of as though he published the book, if he did as he agreed. He does not remember of hearing any reason for putting Morgan into the carriage by force, but Morgan admitted that he had agreed with Loton Lawson that he had agreed to go, and appeared to apologize, and stated that he did not know what the arrangements were at the jail. Witness thoroughly understood that the only object was to keep Morgan from Miller and his associates, and stop the publication of the book."

When Whitney was apprised while at work on the Ohio canal that Garlinghouse was on his way to arrest him, he left Loutsville and went to St. Louis, where a brother-in-law of his resided, but after remaining there for a short time returned voluntarily to Rochester and surrendered himself.

James L. Gillis, the co-respondent of Whitney, at the time of the Morgan abduction was a resident of the North-western part of Pennsylvania, where he had located in the year 1822. He was a native of Washington county, New York. He served in the war of 1812 and was with General Scott at the battle of Lundy's Lane, where he was wounded. That part of Pennsylvania to which he had emigrated was at the time a wild country, and but few inhab-

and he was not at all sure that he was so directly a witness to the abduction. After his settlement with L. & Nelson, he returned to his home in Vermont. In the spring of 1836 he was called on to go to New York on a visit to two of his friends who were in the "Hudson" county, New York. He went to New York to get his horse at Vernon, and went to New York on his business and from there to Philadelphia to attend to some business demanding his personal attention. He was called to go to New York and died at the residence of his son in New York. It was over a month before he was able to get back to his home in his isolated country. He was called to the journey of some business and he was called to the journey of some business and he was called to the journey of some business. He did not get ready to resume his journey home until about the time of the Morgan abduction, but was prepared to leave in a day or two. On the 12th of September he went to Fairbairn to negotiate a contract. He stopped at one of the banks in that village, but not having completed his business when the regular stage left he returned in the evening by a "return extra coach," to Vernon. He then concluded to go on to Rochester the same night to expedite matters and close up his business preparatory for his early return to his home in Pennsylvania. He had in Rochester previously sold a quantity of wheat and purchased a lot of mill irons to take with him back to Pennsylvania. He thinks he must have been ahead of the Morgan carriage all the way to Rochester, as he neither saw or heard of it, and had never till some days afterwards ever heard of Morgan at all. A witness by the name of Felt on the trial, testified that "Gillis is a thorough driving man who starts on a journey without regard to day or night." Another witness testified that "Gillis is a business

man and very enterprising." He having closed his affairs in that section of the country, soon after returned to his home in Pennsylvania. It was some time in that out of the way section of the country before he heard what was going on, or that he was accused of being one of the "Morgan abductors," but it did reach him after a while, and he at once started for Canandaigua to inquire into matters, and confront his accusers. When he arrived at Canandaigua he was formally arrested before he got out of the stage, and put under bonds to appear at a future term of the Court.

At the term of Court to which he was recognized to appear, he was present and demanded his trial, but Whitney not having returned from the west, Gillis was refused a trial until his co-respondent was arrested and in the jurisdiction of the Court. So he alternated back and forth between New York and Pennsylvania at every term of the Court for nearly two years. It was finally stipulated between the attorneys that Mr. Gillis need not attend any more terms, until he was served with notice that the prosecutor and Court were ready to hear and determine his case.

At length Whitney returned and was arraigned on the indictment. The case came on for trial at the May term, 1829. A notice of the time of the trial had been sent by mail, but owing to the irregularities of the mail facilities of that day, and the great distance to any postoffice from Mr. Gillis' residence it failed to reach him. The opening proceedings in the case, are here subjoined, from which it will be seen that Mr. Gillis was not present, but was patiently awaiting a summons at his home in Pennsylvania, to appear, when informed his case was ready for trial:

"ONTARIO GENERAL SESSIONS, }  
*May Term, 1829.* }

The People, vs. John Whitney and James L. Gillis.	}	Indictment for conspiracy, etc
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"NATHANIEL HOWELL, Judge.

"FOR THE PEOPLE—John C. Spencer, Special Attorney,  
 and Bowen Whiting, District Attorney.

"FOR THE DEFENDANTS—Gen. Vincent Mathews, Ebenezer Griffin, Dudley Marvin and M. H. Sibley, Esquires.

"John Whitney, present.

"James L. Gillis, absent.

"Mr. Spencer declared his intention of trying the defendants together. Mr. Griffin desired that Whitney might be tried alone, but Mr. Spencer insisted that there was a connection between the two, and persisted in trying them together.

"Mr. Sibley objected to the trial of Gillis in his absence, and appealed to the Court to have his trial postponed, in the consideration of the peculiar circumstances of the case; that Gillis had attended three or four times, ready to be tried, from another State; that the notice of trial which had been sent to him had not reached him.

"A long discussion followed between Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sibley, and the Court declined putting off Gillis' trial.

"The Court intimated an opinion that the defendants should be tried separately, but would not direct. The Special Attorney remarked that the reason for trying them together, was the convenience of the witnesses and the little remaining time in the present term.

"Mr. Sibley then read an affidavit that John C. Cooper was a material witness for Gillis, and had been subpoenaed, but has not attended; and applied to put off the trial of him in consequence.

"The Court again overruled the motion to postpone the trial of Gillis.

"Trial postponed till afternoon.

*"Afternoon.*—Mr. Sibley wished to be considered as not assenting to the trial of Gillis in his absence."

The trial then proceeded, and a mass of testimony was taken. The evidence showed pretty plainly that Whitney accompanied the Morgan carriage from Canandaigua to some point on the Ridge Road west of Rochester, but the only possible proof that Mr. Gillis had any connection with the affair was that he was in Canandaigua the same day and returned to Victor the same evening the carriage did. A Mrs. Colier, living at Victor, said she saw the carriage go into the yard of Enos Gillis, the defendant's brother, but afterwards admitted that it might have been the carriage of Samuel Gillis, which often went there, and it might have been some other evening she saw it—so long a time had transpired she could not remember. Two other witnesses, Aldrich and Cone, gave some testimony of seeing the defendant Gillis with the Morgan party while it stopped at Victor, but their stories were so contradictory and so completely rebutted by other and more respectable witnesses, that there was no doubt of their impeachment.

The trial resulted in the jury bringing in a verdict of guilty as to Whitney, but were unable to agree upon a verdict as to Gillis.

Whitney was then sentenced by Judge Howell to be confined in the Ontario county jail for the term of one year and four months, and the sentence immediately carried into execution. In June, 1830, he was taken out of jail and conveyed to Lockport by the prosecution as a witness to testify in the case of Ezekiel Jewett, but when placed upon the stand refused to be sworn, saying "that he was not in the enjoyment of any of the rights and privileges of a citi-

zen, and as his body was kept in confinement, he preferred confining his mind also." The Court ordered him to be imprisoned 30 days in the Canandaigua jail, and to pay a fine of \$250, for contempt. It does not appear that the order for contempt was ever executed, and was either remitted by the Judge subsequently, or by a pardon obtained from the executive of the State.

His term of imprisonment expired in September, 1830, when he was released. He returned to Rochester, but after a few years he emigrated to the West, first to Michigan, from thence to Illinois, and lived to a ripe old age a highly respected and useful citizen. He died in the city of Chicago, in 1870, aged over 80 years.

Immediately after the joint trial of Whitney and Gillis, and the jury failing to agree as to the latter, a sheriff was sent to Pennsylvania to re-arrest Mr. Gillis and bring him to Canandaigua, which being done he was required to renew his bail, and his second trial postponed to some future term. After several journeys back and forth again Mr. Gillis' case was brought on for trial at the November term 1830, and was one of the last, if not the last, of the trials ever had in relation to the Morgan affair.

Judge Howell again presided, but John C. Spencer was no longer the public prosecutor. He was succeeded by Victory Birdsye, who was assisted by Bowen Whiting, the District Attorney. Mr. Gillis was defended by Messrs. Barnard, Griffin and Sibley, attorneys and counselors. Neither Mr. Gillis nor his counsel made any objection to the panel of jurors, and the prosecution exhibited none of that reviling and bitter spirit which had been exhibited under the administration of the former  
lic prosecutor. In fact, it was remarked that the trial

was a fair and manly investigation, and was long remembered as distinguished from the former trials, as honorable to the cause of justice, to the bar, the bench and the jury box.

The testimony was substantially the same as on the former trial. The trial only lasted three days. Mr. Barnard, one of Gillis' counsel, closed his address to the jury with the following eloquent peroration in summing up his argument:

What is the case of Gillis? For four long years has he been charged with crime, when to charge was to convict. He has suffered and borne without murmuring, the taunts of a pitiless world—of the wicked, and honest, but deceived—and now comes to throw himself upon you for protection. Eight times, including the present, has he been here for trial—once been tried in his absence when twelve men couldn't bring him in as guilty—he walked over the burning ploughshare bare but unblistered. We all know that the public ear was filled with rumors of his absconding, yet you saw him come here after his indictment, and confront his accusers, and you will remember the public ceremony of serving a warrant upon him as he arrived in the stage.

Not satisfied, and without notifying him for a second trial, a formal requisition is made upon the Governor of Pennsylvania, a Sheriff sent for him and his extensive business once more interrupted—more expense must be added to the enormous amount he had already been compelled to pay out; and hardly had he arrived on the confines of this State, before the press groans again with his criminality, and again the selfish, the cold, the wicked and the vulgar, unite in heaping infamy on his name! Gentlemen, he is now yours. His home, with its infant circle and its new ties, waits for the joyful return of the husband and father or to receive tidings of its desolation—the burial of its peace and its hopes! God avert from him and his house, such a calamity! Gentlemen, he is innocent—HE IS INNO-



CENT; and even now methinks I hear the echo of your righteous verdict, "HE IS! HE IS!"

The jury without hesitation brought in a verdict of "not guilty," and Mr. Gillis was then released from further expense or trouble from this harrassing and expensive affair. The excitement soon after was consigned to its grave and the old Court House in Canandaigua, and the whole community enjoyed a more healthily calm.

Judge Gillis, now having vindicated his character from Anti-masonic aspersion, returned to Pennsylvania, and pursued his avocations without further interference. To show the inveterate animosity of the Anti-masonic leaders towards every one who might be suspected of being concerned in the abduction, it will only be necessary to refer to an incident in connection with Mr. Gillis, and the determination of some of them to ruin financially, if they could not prove any crime against them. The Courts of General Session were composed of a presiding judge and two associate judges, which were generally denominated "Side Judges." These latter were generally picked up out of some country justices of the peace and selected by the partisan managers to help the ticket, with but little regard to their fitness or capacity. The office was a mere sinecure, and the presiding judges, who were appointed by the Governor, and selected generally for their competency as jurists, paid but little attention to their associates, who frequently were devoid of all knowledge of the devious ways of the law, and were content to enjoy the honors of their stations and the pay they received, scarcely ever interfering with the presiding judge's ruling. At the time of the joint trial of ~~Y~~ and Gillis Judge Howell had for one of his associates on the bench a brawling Anti-masonic politician by

the name of Rawson. After the verdict of the jury was received in which it disagreed as to Gillis, this Rawson remarked to some of his Anti-masonic friends, on the verandah of the principal hotel, that "if they could not get Gillis convicted, they could at least ruin him—they could keep him trotting back and forth from Pennsylvania to Canandaigua till he became a bankrupt, and then his money gone it would be an easy matter to get a jury to bring in a verdict of guilty." Some one overhearing this threat reported it to Mr. Gillis. It was said that it was the only time that Mr. Gillis had ever lost his patience or manifested any passion towards his persecutors, but on this occasion he exhibited some considerable excitement. He immediately sought Rawson, and finding him near the entrance to the Hotel, surrounded by a large crowd of people, who were from all parts of the country attending the term of court, Mr. Gillis demanded of him to know if he had been correctly informed in regard to what he had been told he (Rawson) had said. It is supposed that Gillis' appearance under the excited state of his feelings was rather belligerent and Rawson slunk back and maintained a strict silence until the demand had been repeated, when in a trembling voice he replied: "Perhaps I did make such remark." Gillis then said: "Judge Rawson, I am here a prisoner, not a free man, but I warn you, if you ever step your foot on Pennsylvania soil, or if I hear of your being away from this county, I will travel three hundred miles if necessary to meet you, and will then inflict such a castigation upon your carcass that only the grave shall hide your shame!" The crowd although composed mainly of Anti-masons, applauded Mr. Gillis, and Rawson felt the rebuke so keenly that he resigned his position, and never again sat

as he was called, a "basswood" Judge afterwards. He was appointed as one of the delegates to the Anti-masonic National Convention at Baltimore in September, 1830, but declined to go, it is said for the reason that he feared Gillis would meet him somewhere on the route, or at Baltimore.

After his acquittal, Mr. Gillis entered upon a large and extensive business of farming and the manufacture of lumber. He resided there for forty years, and was honored by several successive elections to both Houses of the State Legislature, and several local and judicial offices of his county. In 1856 he was elected a member of Congress from the 24th district of Pennsylvania. This district was composed of the counties of Venango, Warren, Elk, McKean, Clarion, Jefferson and Clearfield—the largest Congressional District, at that time, in the State. After serving his term in Congress he was appointed by President Buchanan, Indian Agent for the Pawnee Reservation in Nebraska, which office he held till 1862. In that year he took up his residence in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, where he still resides at the age of 82 years, a hale and hearty old man, revered and esteemed by all who know him.

Thus we close our short history of these trials, and the parties charged with the abduction of Morgan.

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DAVID C. MILLER,

the first instigator and partner of Morgan in the publication of the "Morgan Book," it is reported sold the first edition of the work very rapidly and was preparing to issue another in a more ample form, when it seems that Elder David Bernard, having added greatly to the Morgan work, procured another copy-right, and being supported by the *seceder's* convention at Leroy, and the Anti-masonic com-

mittee, Miller abandoned the further publication of the work. It appears that his venture was a success in a financial point, and he had but little delay in disposing of his whole edition at one dollar each. He demurred to Bernard's right to usurp his prerogative as the Morgan publisher, but the Anti-masons promising to elect him Clerk of Genesee county, an office worth from two to three thousand dollars a year, he withdrew his claim. He was elected such Clerk in November, 1828, but did not hold the office to the end of the term. He neglected, or was wholly incapable of performing the duties of the office for which he had been elected, and his old habits of intemperance increasing upon him, the records of the county and of the courts were soon in a jumbled mass of confusion, so much so that the Court appointed a competent man to take charge of the office. He became besotted, and his son who had ostensibly taken his place as editor of the "Republican Advocate," succeeded no better than his father. They both left Batavia in 1832, and went to Pennsylvania, as it was understood, and he was no more heard of about or in Batavia, and left no friends who took sufficient interest in his fate to make any inquiries as to his subsequent career.

#### MRS. MORGAN,

the wife, or widow, left at Batavia, after her husband's disappearance, has had a history assigned her almost as mysterious as the fate of her consort, as she has had more reported locations for her residence since that period than usually falls to the lot of one woman. At one time it was reported that she was living in Pennsylvania, at another in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, and many persons claim that they knew her in Kentucky, and others in Michigan. It was told that some ten years after she became a "widow"

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and it was supposed would support the Liberal Republican nomination. But the coolness that had existed between him and Greeley since 1854, permitted him to make some exertions to defeat his old friend and co-worker in Whig days, but when he was no more of earth, he wept the true tears of sympathy over his grave, and no one was more sincere in lamenting the death of the great journalist. Mr. Weed long ago retired from active journalistic life, and resides in a "brown stone front" in opulence, on Fifth Avenue, New York, hale and hearty at an advanced age. He retired from the Albany Evening Journal, soon after the election of Mr. Lincoln, in 1860, and removed to New York. He was employed by Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward during the war on a secret mission to Europe. He was also selected administration in various other confidential missions by the of a delicate nature during that critical period of the country's history. After the war he could not remain inactive, but, in the spring of 1867, purchased the "Commercial Advertiser," a New York evening paper, and commenced his editorial life anew, but ill-health caused him to abandon the newspaper business forever. Some years now he has been contributing to the Magazine literature of the day, and his articles are read with great interest by the public. In his salutatory, on assuming the editorship of the Commercial Advertiser, in 1867, he mentions many personal reminiscences of his early life, but omits all allusion to the subject of Morgan and political Anti-masonry. From this, it may be inferred that he would desire his biographer, when the time comes to write his life, to blot out of his history all reference to the ABDUCTION OF WILLIAM MOR-  
GAN AND THE ANTI-MASONIC EXCITEMENT OF 1826-30.







**G. B. C.**  
**OCT 03 1985**

